THE COUNT d'Soiſſons.

A Gallant NOVEL.

Tranſlated out of French.

Licenſed, *June* 21. 1687.
R. L'ESTRANGE.

LONDON,
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The Count
De SOISSONS:
A Gallant Novel.

NEver was Prince made Recommendable by such a World of fine Qualities, as the Late Count *de Soissons*; I mean not him that dy'd last, but him that was kill'd at the Battle of *Sedan*. All was answerable to the Grandeur of his Birth, and tho' he was, without Contest, of the first House of the World, The House of *Bourbon* We may nevertheless say that his heart was Infinitely above his Birth. His Person had all the Perfections of Make, His face Majesty and Sweetness, His Wit, Niceness and Penetration; His

Carriage was ſtately towards Princes of his own Rank, but his Civility ſuch towards Others, as that all People made their Court to him, not ſo much in Conſideration of the favours they thence expected, as of the Pleaſure there was in loving him. He was Liberal beyond Imagination, and tho' he had a vaſt Eſtate, and the fineſt Charge of the Court, yet his never-failing Generoſity often left him not a Penny in his Coffers.

Great Maſter of the Kings Houſhold

There are thoſe that will needs have all theſe fine Qualities to have been tarniſh'd by an Over-great Ambition. They ground their Opinion upon his having ſeveral times put the Court to the fatall Neceſſity of reducing him to his Duty by the Dint of Arms; But, alas! They knew not all that paſs'd in Private. They were ignorant that it was Love that occaſion'd all the falſe ſteps he made,

or

or the Power this Unhappy Paſſion has over the greateſt Hearts. He was more ſubmiſſive than any Man to the Kings Orders, He was thereunto Oblig'd both in the Quality of Subject and of Relation, ſince he had the honour to wear the Auguſt Name of *Bourbon*: But it being his ill fate to have his Princes Miniſter for his Rival, it is not to be wondered, if the World has often to Diſobedience imputed the things he was prompted to by the fear of a man that had little Leſs Power then the King himſelf. The Relation I am going to give, will unfold this Better than all I might be able to ſay here; wherefore without dwelling longer up his Juſtification, I imagine it will be ſufficient to read this Hiſtory to be perſuaded, that if he was not altogether Exempt from Crime, he was at leaſt more unfortunate than Culpable.

We cannot say that Gallantry did at that time Publiquely obtain in the Court of *France*. The King being a Prince extremly Pious, expres'd so much aversion for such sort of Weaknesses, that whoever lay under such failings, us'd his utmost Endeavours not only to conceal them from his Eyes, but also from the Whole Court. Beauties were, nevertheless, as Common there as at this day, there were *Montbasons*, *Hautesorts*, and several other Ladies, whose Merit was Capable of making a thousand Conquests. Nay, and their fetters were but the stronger; the reason is that Men made a Mystery of declaring their Love to them, Not but that they were very willing as well as now adays, to ease themselves of so heavy a Burden, as is a Concern of that Nature; but because they were afraid of becoming Ungratefull to the King, who, as I have newly

said,

ſaid, diſapprov'd of all that had the name of Love.

But the Power of Kings does not extend ſo far as to force Peoples inclinations, principally in this matter, wherein moſt commonly we have no Power upon our ſelves. The Cardinal *de Richelieu* does ſufficiently juſtify what I here aſſert; He, who was more than any man oblig'd to ſtudy to pleaſe the King, and who, beſides, had important amuzements, that a man would never have ſaid that he had time to make Love, did, nevertheleſs, find the lieſure to caſt his Eyes upon the Dutcheſs of *Elbœuf*, and as ſhe was a Princeſs of a Moſt Extraordinary Beauty, he made her quickly ſenſible, that neither the Purple, nor the Quality of Chief Miniſter were a ſecure defence againſt her Merit.

This Cardinal was under great Obligations to Nature, that had al-

lotted him ſuch infinite Parts, that he paſs'd for the Principal Genius of the Age. If he had had as much occaſion to pride himſelf for Advantages of Body, he would have been the firſt Man of the Univerſe. But there wanting much of th' One's being anſwerable to th' Other; tho' he was pretty well Shap'd, yet there was nothing gracefull in his Deportment; Beſides he was ſo ſtrangely unprovided of that Majeſty, ſo much to be deſired in the Countenance, that if People had not known the ſtation to which the King had call'd him, they would never have ſaid by his Phyſiognomy he ought to poſſeſs ſo advantageous a Place. However tho' he knew it to be one of the Qualities the moſt neceſſary to pleaſe Ladies, yet either that he knew not himſelf, the Caſe of many Perſons, or, in ſhort, that he thought his Wit and Fortune were capable of repairing

repairing that Defect, he resolv'd no longer to languish in expectation of what he was to hope. Wherefore after having several times let her know as well by his looks, as by the most singular favours he had granted her, that he distinguish'd her from all the Persons of her sex, he entreated that he might see her in Private, and us'd as a Pretence an affair her husband had at Court.

Madam d' Elbœuf, who had hitherto interpreted as good Breeding all he had done in her Behalf, still thinking him to be animated with the same Sentiments, she highly extoll'd his Carriage, so far as to say in a Numerous Company, that she knew not how this Minister came to have Enemies, since nothing could be added to his Civility. Upon this Ground she granted him the Rendezvous he required, and as he was in Possession of making no Visits, she

went to his own Houſe. As ſoon as he knew of her coming he went out to meet her; But with ſuch a ruffled look, that had ſhe minded him in the leaſt, ſhe might eaſily have gueſs'd, that he had not his wonted ſerenity of mind. After he had caus'd a Chair to be reach'd her, and bid all their Attendants withdraw, Madam *de Elbœuf* going about to diſcourſe upon the concern that had brought her thither; *That's needleſs Madam*, he made her anſwer, *and what I am to tell you, is, that hitherto I have ever thought that the Place I ſtand poſſeſs'd of, was the thing in the World the moſt heavy and Ungratefull. The Important Sollicitudes with which a mind is fretted from Morning to Evening, the repoſe of the Night, diſturb'd by affairs that ariſe, the fear of an ill ſucceſs, which the Maſter moſt commonly lays at the Miniſters Door, tho he has done his beſt, the Jelouſy of the Grandees, the* Odium *of the People*

Pe ple. What more ſhall I ſay, in ſhort, the Difficulty of giving every body content? All this I ſay is an ample matter to cauſe a Man to make Reflexion, that is in ſuch a Poſt as mine. Nay, and I own that theſe Conſiderations had ſo pawl'd me, that if the King had not ſeveral times expreſs'd to me that he deſired I would continue him my ſervices, I ſhould infallibly have giv'n way to the Temptation I was under of beſeeching him to get another to ſupply my Place. But, Madam, may I dare to tell it you, the pleaſure there is in ſometimes having the Occaſion of doing you ſervice is ſo great a Bleſſing, that all the annoyances I have newly inſtanc'd are nothing in Compariſon. Having ſuch Sentiments it is needleſs for you to give me a long account of your Concerns, I make 'em my own, and in this, as in all Other things you ſhall ſee, that I value My Lady Dutcheſs of Elbœuf *above all Perſons in the World.*

Theſe Words were too ſignifica-

tive to leave that Lady any

to doubt of what he thereby meant. But ſuppoſe her Mind ſo otherwiſe diverted as not to apprehend their Senſe, ſhe needed only to have look'd upon him to have gueſs'd with what ſentiments he was animated. His Eyes Sparkled, and the Purple he had on was not brighter than the Colour that was painted on his face. Tho' Madam *de Elbœuf* had an infinite ſtock of Wit, ſhe had it not ſo ready as immediately to determine upon the anſwer it beſt became her to make. She ſeem'd Nonpluſs'd, and this Miniſter being in no wiſe ſorry for that, ſeeing it to be occaſion'd only by her having penetrated into his moſt ſecret Sentiments. Wherefore thinking it behov'd him to finiſh what he had begun; *I muſt explain my ſelf better Madam,* he renew'd, *and ſince you are come to attack my Liberty in my very Cloſet, why ſhould I conceal from you that it was a Miracle only*

due

due to the moſt Lovely Perſon Living.

As the Dutcheſs had appeared perplex'd, when ſhe might as yet make ſemblanee of being unacquainted with his Paſſion, her Diſorder was ſtrangely augmented when ſhe ſaw it to be paſt all Remedy. One while her ſpirit adviſ'd her to put him in Mind of what was owing to a Perſon of her Rank, another ſhe thought convenient to diſſemble on the ſcore of the need her Husband had of him; but judging that Indulgence might be as prejudicial to her as a ſcornfull ſtatelyneſs, She took a Medium, which was to turn what he ſaid into Raillery. *Your Eminency*, ſhe made him anſwer, *Courts your Diverſion at my Coſt, I never had any of theſe Gallantries from any other than my Lord the Cardinal, and I am ſo little us'd t'em, as that I muſt have been very eaſy of Belief, if I took the leaſt notice of what he ſays to me in that matter.*

The

The Cardinal fearing a ſharper anſwer, was overjoy'd at this, which he interpreted to his advantage. And imagining that he had nothing more then her Incredulity to Combate; *Would to God, Madam,* ſaid he to her, *that what you ſay were true; But I know the Contrary. The Duke your Husband lov'd you before you were his Wife, and I am much afraid that in giving your ſelf to him, you rather Conſulted your Inclination than your Duty. Nor yet is this all I dread, thoſe fervencies have had time to cool, that are no longer valu'd from the Moment that they no longer coſt any trouble. I ſhould much rather fear ſome happy Rival, and I am very much miſtaken, if I know not one much more formidable than your Husband.*

The Dutcheſs bluſht at theſe words, and the Cardinal interpreting this Action to the Confuſion ſhe was under at her having been detected; *I have hit the Mark*

to

to a hair, he added, *and is it not true, Madam, that you love your Husband far leſs then the Count de* ——— He paus'd without thinking fit to name him, and the Dutcheſs, who had only bluſht, for that ſhe ſaw her ſelf oblig'd to liſten to another Converſation than that on whoſe account ſhe came, being no longer able to endure he ſhould thus wrong her Virtue; *Proceed*, ſaid ſhe to him, *and inform me of what I know not my ſelf, tho' I ought to know it better than any body. You'd be cautious how ye own'd it to me*, the Cardinal immediately retorted, *a Secret of that Conſequence is not eaſily communicated, & eſpecially to a Perſon ſo much concern'd in't as I. But no matter, I ſhall know it, in ſpight of all the Precautions that either of ye may take, and if the World thinks me able to penetrate into the very Cabinets of the Princes of* Europe, *when the King my Maſter's Intereſt is only concern'd, what would I not do in an occaſion*

casion that concerns my whole repose.

Now it was somewhat an extraordinary thing, that such a Declaration as this, should at the same time be accompany'd with threats. A Lover, commonly, vails his humour at the first; and that Course might, principally, be expected from his Eminency, who so well knew how to Counterfeit in all sorts of occasions. But as it is the Property of Love to lay Reason aside, it is not to be wond'red if his Conduct was so surprizing. Madam *d'Elbœuf* knew not how to reconcile her self to this his Carriage, and though he stood upon such a Level as debarr'd Expostulation, she quickly chang'd the Resolution she had taken of Husbanding him. *I stand in need of you*, she said to him, *but not any Consideration shall ever hinder me from causing those regards to be paid me that are my due, and it's a very pleasant business to see a man of your Character become*

become an Inamorato, *nay and of a Perſon of my Quality. But what I find moſt extrordinary is, that you dare to offend me upon ſo ridiculous a Prepoſſeſſion, which only you can admit into ones Imagination.*

The *Cardinal* was extremely ſurpriz'd to ſee the Diſdain with which ſhe utter'd theſe words. He us'd his utmoſt Endeavours to mollify what he had ſaid to her, giving her to underſtand, that it was only thro' an exceſs of Love. But ſhe prov'd to be as little tractable upon that word, as upon his Jelouſy; Inſomuch that after having ſaid ſeveral diſobliging things to him, ſhe went away without vouchſafing to hearken any longer to his Juſtifications. The way between his Eminency's Palace and *Elbœuf*-Hall gave her time to recover her ſelf from the Diſorder this bus'neſs had put her in. She found the Count de *Soiſſons* with her Husband, and as the latter had

told the former of her being gone to the Cardinal's Palace upon a matter of Moment to him, the first Question they both put to her, was whether she was satisfy'd with the Minister. *Not over-well*, Madam *d'Elbœuf* made 'em answer, *and I am very much mistaken if our Concern does not miscarry.* They ask'd her the Reason, and as she did not think convenient to boast of what was befall'n her, she study'd an Evasion, which she presently caus'd to pass currant with 'em. *This is strange*, the Count *de Soissons* said, *he seems to make it his whole Delight to disoblige all People, and whereas he ought to Court the Amity of Persons of our Quality, he only contrives how to injure them.* He thereupon told an occasion or two wherein himself had reason to complain of him, and the Duke *d'Elbœuf* was of his opinion. While they were upon this Topick, word was brought the Duke *d'Elbœuf* that a Person ask'd to

speak

ſpeak with him, and being free with the Count *de Soiſſons*, he entreated him to ſtay with his Wife, 'till he had diſpatch'd the Concern in hand.

The Duke being gone, the Count fell again to talk of the Cardinal, and while they were both ſaying ſeveral things that were not overmuch to his Advantage, a Meſſage came to my Lady Dutcheſs *d'Elbœuf* that a Gentleman ask'd to ſpeak with her from the Cardinal. She gave order for his being introduc'd, and going to meet him, that ſhe might know what he had to ſay to her, he preſented her a Paper, telling her, that by it ſhe would find, that the Buſineſs was done ſhe came upon to his Eminency. As ſhe was not willing the Count ſhould know the leaſt of what had paſs'd between 'em; *Be pleas'd to tell him*, ſaid ſhe to this Gentleman, *that I am very much oblig'd to him, and that*

Mr.

Mr. d'Elbœuf *and I will come to make him our Acknowledgments.* The Count *de Soiſſons* to make his Court to the Dutcheſs; *tell his Eminency alſo*, ſaid he to the Gentleman, *that you found me here, and that I ſo far eſpouſe the Concerns of Mr. and Madam* d'Elbœuf, *that if I had thought I could have been uſefull to them in joyning my Entreaties to theirs, I would have gone with 'em to Sollicit the favour he has newly granted them.*

The Gentleman withdrew, after having made his Leg, and the Count *de Soiſſons* who had no good opinion of the Cardinal, *Let's ſee Madam*, ſaid he to the Dutcheſs *d'Elbœuf, if matters go according to your Deſire; but for my part I muſt own t'ye, that as he does not willingly oblige, I believe him no farther than I ſee him.* At theſe words he took the Paper out of her hands that was ſeal'd, and having broke open the Seal, without her hindring him from

from ſo doing, not thinking it contain'd any thing but what he might ſee, he found two Papers in the Cover much of the ſame bigneſs. He open'd the firſt at hand, and the firſt thing he read was his own Name; Inſomuch that thinking he was miſtaken, he view'd it more fixedly; but in ſhort, after having read it over and over, he plainly perceiv'd that he was more concern'd in the matter than he expected. After that he had not the Curioſity to read the other, which, indeed, was not worth the trouble, ſince it was only the Expedition of the Affair before-mention'd: And contenting himſelf with this, *Truly Madam*, ſaid he to this Princeſs, *the Cardinal is much more my Friend than I imagin'd. You may here if you pleaſe ſee a thing which I ſhould never have dared to have ſpoken to you of, ſo very Powerfull o'er my Soul was the Reſpect I ſhall ever have for you; but ſince the occaſion is*

ſo

so seasonably offer'd, give me leave to tell you that it is impossible but that you must have taken notice of the Love I have for you, since he that is not half so much concern'd in't does positively declare to you that I love you. This is a piece of Service, he added, *which I shall never forget, and tho' the Passion he expresses for you himself in the same Letter ought to Allarum me, I must own to you that he has freed me out of so perplexing a Bus'ness for me, that to take all I bear him more good than ill will.*

In saying that, he presented the Letter to the Dutchess; but beside, as what had pass'd between his Eminency & her, made her Conjecture what he had been capable of Writing to her, he had newly told her sufficient, as to render needless her shrifting any farther into it's Contents; *I thought you,* said she, *so much my Friend as with me to have laught at the Cardinal's Passion, and in case of need to have offer'd me your*

assistance

assistance against him, supposing he should make use of his Power, so as to revenge himself for the Contempt, with which I pretend to reward him. But by what I perceive, you think me so silly, as to give Credit to your Discourse, as if I knew not how to discern what departs from Truth and what from Raillery. I Railly you, Madam, the Count reply'd; *You whom I consider as the Person in the World, that in all kinds merits the most Distinction: My past Actions do they give you that* Idea *of me? And if you would vouchsafe to recall 'em to mind, wou'd you not be the first to say, that you must have been very blind, if you have not been sensible that they had another source than the Amity I have for My Lord Duke your Husband? I have Suck'd with my Milk that the greatest Enemies we had to our Family were the Princes of his. Nevertheless I have admitted him my Confident, and I may say that I have no secret that is so to him, unless it be that I have conceal'd*

the

the Paſſion from him that I have ever been ſenſible of for you But what did I ſay? Would to God I had ever Lov'd you, he ſhould never have had you, or he ſhould firſt have had my Life. But you know Love has not the ſtart of Knowledge, and that having only ſeen you after your Marriage, my Affection could only bear date from that time. To what then do you attribute this Reunion that was impoſſible without you, but you occaſion much more difficult things, and after having in ſpight of me, made me be ſilent, what is there that you are not capable of bringing about?

He would have enlarg'd much in his Diſcourſe, had not the Duke return'd. His Wife, who was mightily diſorder'd, that ſhe might not give him time to obſerve her, nor the Count, who was in the like condition, preſented him one of the Papers ſhe had receiv'd from the Cardinal, and ſuppreſs'd that which it was

not

not convenient he ſhould be inform'd of. He ſtood at gaze to ſee what it contain'd, after what his Wife had told him a moment before, and not being able to conceal his ſurprize. *Did not you tell me, Madam*, ſaid he to her, *that we had nothing to hope, and how can ſo ſudden a change have come about in ſo ſhort a time?* The Count *de Soiſſons* pretended to ſtrike in with his Amazement, and after having reaſon'd thereupon, he told him, *he needed not to care how the thing came about, ſince he had what he demanded.*

In the mean while the Gentleman the Cardinal had ſent to this Dutcheſs, being return'd to his Maſter, he inform'd him how he had found her with the Count *de Soiſſons*, and of the Complement made him by that Prince. This was no ſmall matter of vexation to his Eminency, who had no mind he ſhould Intereſt himſelf ſo far in the Dutcheſſes Concerns, whence

he

he Prognosticated ill Consequences for himself, *I knew very well*, said he to himself, *that he Lov'd her, but I knew not that she made him the like returns. This is but too true, otherwise he would have let her make her Complements by her self, without medling in the Matter. I have mighty Occasion, forsooth, for his acknowledgments, and why may not I resent the Obstacle he interposes to my desires.*

Nevertheless as he was less proper to make Complaints, than to contrive his ease, his lasted not long, and his whole drift was to free himself of so dangerous a Rival. Two means he fancy'd he had to bring this about, One to dispatch him out of the way, under Colour of giving him an Employ, th' Other of marrying him so advantageously, and with a Person so accomplisht in Body and Mind, as might be capable of making him forget the Dutchess. However Policy thwarted both these

ways. The Count, who had so great a heart, that never would buckle under him, as the rest of the Kingdom had done, made him presume that since his Conduct was such in his Present Circumstances, he would be much more haughty, when he had attain'd to a greater degree of Power. On another side he was not willing to give matter of jelousy to the Prince of *Conde*, who would not have fail'd to have fomented the discontent of several who boar envy to his Fortune, If he had seen him advance a Prince, who properly speaking was the greatest enemy he had. And indeed he expostulated him the Quality of Prince of the Blood, for reasons that are sufficiently known in History, and which it would be superfluous to insert in this Place.

Thus not knowing on what to determine, he let some time slip, during which the Count *de Soiſ-*

Jons us'd his utmoſt Endeavours to ſee the Dutcheſs again. But ſhe ſhun'd him with that Care, that few People but took notice on't. Only her Husband relying, calmly, upon her Conduct, made not any Reflexion upon this her Carriage; On the Contrary he often brought the Count to Eat at his Houſe, but as often as he did ſo, ſhe pretended indiſpoſition; Inſomuch that the hopes vaniſh'd he had of ſeeing her. The Cardinal, who in matter of Love, as well as of Policy, thought there was nothing like having good ſpies, being inform'd by one he had about the Dutcheſs, that far from making returns to the Count's Paſſion, ſhe avoided him with a moſt inconceivable Care, was in ſome manner ſolac'd for the anxious hours ſhe made him paſs himſelf. However experience having taught him that there is nothing impoſſible to a Lover that does not deſiſt,

ſiſt, he reſolv'd to deliver himſelf out of fear, by a Propoſition that ſeem'd very advantageous for the Count, but which in the bottom, inſtead of advancing him, would have cover'd him with infamy. He had a Niece, Madam *de Comballet*, by Name, and who ſince has worn the Title of Dutcheſs *d'Aiguillon*. She was a Perſon of a ſingular Beauty, and if we may believe Detraction, he himſelf had not been able to reſiſt her Charms, tho' nearneſs of Blood did forbid him to look otherwiſe on her than as a Relation. The Scandalizing Chronicle adds further, that on this account he had unwedded her from her Husband, under Colour of Impotency, and that the deſire of enjoying her himſelf alone, had made him employ his Credit to break off that marriage. But whether all this was Detraction, or elſe that Enjoyment had pawl'd his Appetite, as is uſual, it was upon

her he cast his Eyes, to put the Change upon the Count. For this purpose he resolv'd to annex such great advantages to her Person, as might dazzle him, notwithstanding the vast Difference of their Births, nay & the dis-advantageous rumours that ran about to the Prejudice of her Reputation. The greatest he could annex was to make him gain the Process he had depending against the Prince of *Conde*, whom he pretended to have declared a Bastard, and in Consequence cause himself to be declar'd the First Prince of the Blood, that is to say for Presumtive Heir of the Crown, since neither the King nor the Duke of *Orleans* had then any Children capacitated to supply that Place.

Such a Proposition as this was something so engaging as that he did not doubt but that it would be an Infallible Bait. Yet as the best concerns become ill in the

hands of certain Persons, that know not how to manage 'em, The Cardinal gain'd *Senecterre*, the Intendant of this Princes Houshold, a man, naturally able, and who, besides, after having acquired some Credit with his Master by several years services, let him understand, that what he could not speed in, it was not for Others to meddle withall. And indeed expecting to be receiv'd with open arms: *Good News*, Cry'd he, as soon as he saw the Count, and this Prince asking him what he meant; *Why*, answer'd he, *your Process, if you please your self is Won, and what is more, I bring you tydings of a Beautyfull Wife, and of a support that cannot fail you upon Occasion.* The Count hearing him talk at this rate, imagin'd he had Letters to deliver him from some forreign Prince that desired his Allyanse, & full of Impatience to know from whom it might be, he nam'd cer-

tain Princes to him, that were of the Number of his friends. *We have no need of going ſo far*, then *Seneterre* ſaid to him, *and when you find all this in Cardinal* Richelieus *Allyance, why ſhould you think of People that at moſt can only give you fine Promiſes, and when it ſhall come to Execution, cannot be in a Condition to perform them. But for his part*, added he, *can he promiſe you any thing, but what he can do a thouſand fold more? He need only ſpeak to the Parliament, to make it paſs an Arreſt in your favour: Beſides he holds all the Forces of the Kingdom in his Power, Inſomuch that when you ſhall have occaſion for them, nothing will fail you. In fine, what ſhall I ſay to you? the Crown, if you pleaſe, is at your Diſpoſal, and all that he requires, is, that you would Marry Madam* de Comballet, *that he may be, henceforward, aſſured of your being his Friend. I Marry Madam* de Comballet, the Count anſwer'd all in amaze,

amaze, and all in a rage at the ſame time! *What the Miſtreſs of her own Uncle, the Miſtreſs of a Prieſt, a Sacrilegious, an Inceſtuous Wretch, and in a word, the ſhame of the whole Realm, and of all humane kind! I ſay nothing of her Birth, the one makes me omit the other, but my greateſt ſubject of amazement is, that* Seneterre, *whom I thought mine, ſhould be ſuch a Traytor as to make me ſuch a Propoſal.* *Seneterre* would have reply'd, nay and make him apprehend that he would find his Advantage in the Overture he made him; but the Count loſing Patience, commanded him to hold his peace. And for that he would, nevertheleſs, continue ſpeaking, he gave him ſome blows with his Cane, and then turn'd him out of his Family.

This buſineſs made a great noiſe in the World, thoſe that knew the Count's great heart, imputed it to his high Spirit, and to tell the truth it was in ſome manner, the

occaſion. But for all that, the Love he had for the Dutcheſs contributed more thereunto than all other things. It's needleſs to ſay how angry the Cardinal was at him, it is eaſy to apprehend, that he that ſaw all the Grandees buckle under his Will, did, impatiently, bear ſuch Inſtances of Contempt. Yet tho' he had ſuch a mighty ſtock of Vanity, and muſt for that reaſon have been terribly mortify'd, we may, however, aſſert, that Jelouſy was the thing that created him the moſt trouble. He imagin'd, and not without ground, that the Dutcheſs ſhar'd deep in this refuſal, and tho' he could not reconcile this thought, with the account continually given him by his Spies, that he ſtood not in over-good terms with her, it, nevertheleſs, made deep impreſſions in his mind.

For ſurpluſage of Misfortune he intercepted a Letter the Count writ

writ her, wherein he gave her an exact account of the Converſation he had had with *Seneterre*, and wherein he did not omit to repreſent the offers that had been made him, of cauſing him to be declared not only Firſt Prince of the Bloud, but, likewiſe, to give him what ſhare he pleaſed in the Adminiſtration of the Kingdom, of which the Miniſter oblig'd himſelf to cauſe him to be own'd as Preſumptive Heir by all the Grandees, nay and by all the Parliaments. Yet for the Love of her, would he not in any wiſe cloſe hands with ſuch alluring Offers. That, true indeed, he had us'd as a pretext, Madam *de Comballets* ill reputation, of whom, perhaps, all the Stories that had gone about were only Calumny, but which he was willing, nevertheleſs, to make paſs for as many Truths, that ſo he might have his Ears no longer dinn'd with an Affair to which he

could not hearken, as he had hinted, for her sake. Furthermore, that he thought her too shrewd a Person to believe that tho' he were persuaded of the Ladies Debauchery, it would have been capable of making him refuse her. That a thousand Princes before him had shew'd him the way, and among those Crowned Heads; So true it is that Ambition serves for an excuse to the greatest Defects. That nothing but Love could have done this Miracle, a Miracle so much the greater, as that the matter in agitation was not a meer Establishment, but the greatest Crown in the Universe.

Such were the Contents of this Letter, upon which it is easy to guess the excess of the Personages Jelousy. He sent for the Spy he had about the Dutchess, and making him read it; *You see now*, said he to him immediately; *if I ought not to have thee hang'd for the*

false accounts thou giv'st me. Thou hast hitherto assured me that he got no ground with her, and yet he makes her a Sacrifice of his Refusals. What greater token can there be of their Refusals? and must not I be the most Unfortunate of all men? The Spy did what he could to excuse himself, and wanted not good Reasons. He said that by this Letter, it was plain that the Count endeavoured to insinuate into the Dutchess, that it was for her sake he had refus'd so fair a Fortune; but that this did not imply that the Sacrifice was grateful to her. That the worst-us'd Lovers were those that were to study the best reasons to gain the Confidence of their Mistresses; but that once obtain'd, it was not seen that their Letters entertain'd 'em with such riff-raff stuff. That if the Count stood as well with the Dutchess as his Eminency pretended, his Letter would have been quite in another

ther Stile: That it would have been made up of Raillery, in lieu of those Amorous terms, and if any such had been let fall, they would have been only by the by.

These Reasons would have been good to any man that had had his mind at liberty enough as to apprehend them; But the Cardinal walking hastily as if he had receiv'd some Currier that had brought him the News of the loss of some great Battel: Ah! if he had not been afraid of furnishing matter of talk to his Enemies, he would have done much more. But in short, the care of ones repute is a thing more perplexing than many do imagine. How many People are there that are thereby kept within bounds, and who in the bottom of their Soul do not think the less? It is upon this bottom, that *Moliere* rais'd his *Tartuff*, and if he had been upon the Scene at the time I speak of, perhaps he would

would not have waited so long.

In the mean while the Spy was dismiss'd, and far from causing him to be hang'd, as he had at first threatned to do, he made him a large Present that he might continue him his Service. Then went he directly to the King, whither he was call'd by an Affair of Moment: and as he was full of his Passion; *Yes, Sir*, he said to him, *you must make him lose his Process, and if your Majesty should proceed to Declare in his favour, he would afterwards drive you from off your Throne.* The King understood well enough that he meant the Count *de Soissons*; but as far from having said any thing that had relation to his Person, they had quite another matter in hand, he was mightily surpriz'd at this sally. The Cardinal plainly perceiv'd by the Kings Countenance that some Novelty was depending, and the Words I have repeated having started from him,

him, without his making the least reflexion, he ask'd him what he revolv'd in his mind. *It's for me to ask you*, the King made him answer, *what you revolve in yours, whence it comes that you interrupt our Discourse to speak of the Count* de Soissons. *I, I thought not of him*, the Cardinal answer'd, *and your Majesty must needs be mistaken. I am not mistaken*, the King retorted, *and if you have receiv'd any Advertisement of Consequence, why d'ye any longer deferr imparting it to me?* The Cardinal still retrencht himself upon the Negative, and as he was tax'd with having little *Vertigo's* ever and anon, during which he was wont not to appear in Publick, the King imputed all this to their coming upon him, and dismiss'd him sooner than he would otherwise have done.

In the mean time Mr. *d'Elbœuf* had all he desired of him, and those that were not inform'd of the end

of

of things, could not apprehend whence he acquired ſo much favour. The Cardinal did ſeveral times invite him to come and ſee his fine Houſe of *Ruel*, and bid him bring his Wife along, and his Children too that it ſeem'd as if he would take his whole Family into his Protection. If Madam *d'Elbeuf* had dared, ſhe would have deſired her Husband to have diſpens'd her from going; but that not being to be done, without letting him know, what it's fit a Husband ſhould ever be a Stranger to, ſhe ſuffer'd her ſelf to be led along to that Stately Houſe, where they met with the beſt Entertainment imaginable from the Cardinal. His Eminency had alſo invited thither the Sieur *Deſnoiers*, Secretary of State, the Perſon that after him had the greateſt ſhare in the Affairs of the Kingdom. Not that he meant to regule him, or had any thing of Moment to impart to him;

him; But you must know that the Duke of *Elbœuf* had a Concern in the Council, of which it was convenient that Mr. *Desnoiers* should be throughly inform'd, and as he was commonly overwhelm'd with Affairs, the Duke had not yet been able to find the means of discoursing him particularly upon that matter. Now as the Cardinal had his Designs, he started the business, and as it was a matter of long Discussion, he bid Mr. *Desnoiers* go into a Closet where he would find a Pen and Ink, to make an Extract of all Mr. *d'Elbœuf* had to say to him. This Prince took as a mark of goodness, what was nevertheless only the effect of a self-interested Lover. Madam *d'Elbœuf* plainly perceiv'd the meaning of this, and would, perhaps, have contriv'd to parry the blow, by following her Husband; but he prevented her Design, by telling Mr. *d'Elbœuf*, that while he was

Closetted

Closetted up with Mr. *Desnoiers* he would play a Game at Chess with his Lady. Mr. *d'Elbœuf*, who made a scruple of leaving him all alone, was overjoy'd that he himself propos'd him the means of not being uncivil, and having shut himself up with Mr. *Desnoiers*, he left him all the freedom he desired.

Madam *d'Elbœuf* seeing her self all alone with him (for he had nodded to his People to go out after having set the Chess-men upon the Table) became as red as fire, which the Cardinal perceiving, *Certainly, Madam,* he said to her, *you must needs hate me, as much as I love you, since you are as much in pain in being with me, as I have pleasure in being with you. Nevertheless I had ever heard say, that Hatred was not the fruit of Amity, and that on the contrary the means to render one's self agreeable, was to have for a Person the Sentiments I have for you. But, by what I perceive, my Unhappyness is such,*

such, that what is the Lot of others, is not mine; and that Nature must first run Counter before that I can be happy. If you make your Happyness consist, Madam *d'Elbœuf* answer'd him faintly, *in being belov'd by me, I franckly own that you never will be happy. Nay and it is strange you dare to offend me in this Case, you who know my Duty, and by Consequence cannot invite me to fail in it, at least without shewing the little Consideration you have for me. What, Madam, you reproach me with al, is no Crime,* he answer'd, *or at least, if it be one, it is so on the account of its being annex'd to my Person. If it were the Count of* Soissons *that held you the like discourses, the thing would change its Nature. We know very well that you are not altogether so Cruel to him; Yet, if I durst say it, it is an effect of your little Judgment: I can do as much as he, tho' I am no Prince, and in Case you were in any wise wedded to Ambition, I should*

much

much more than he turn to your account. But what do I say, I am not so happy as to have any Consideration enter into the Love you bear him. If you love him, it is only because he seems lovely to you, whereas it is my ill luck to have you hate me, because you think me the Most Odious of all Men.

Madam *d'Elbeuf* who had only hitherto look'd with indifference upon the Count *de Soissons* was terribly Scandaliz'd that he dar'd to tell her to her Face that she lov'd any other then her Husband. She put on her serious looks, but he to whom jelousy represented as so many Truths all that whirl'd his Phancy. *Be angry, Madam, or not angry,* he said to her, *that shall not make me believe the more or less. I have good Proofs in my Pocket of what I now say, and when matters stand so, would you have me belye such certain Testimonies as those, for Words that you think your self Oblig'd*

to

to ſay for your Reputation. A diſcourſe of this Nature was ſtill aggravating his Offence; and indeed it having ſcandaliz'd Madam *d' Elbœuf* ſtill more then before; *This is too much,* ſaid ſhe to him all in anger, *and pray'e, tell me what you mean by thoſe Proofs you have in your Pocket. A Letter Madam,* the Cardinal replyed, *ſince you will needs know it, but a Letter that ſpeaks and againſt which you have nothing to alledge.* She preſently imagin'd he meant to accuſe her of having written it, and as ſhe well knew the Contrary, *If you ſhew me that,* ſhe ſaid to him, *I le allow of all you pleaſe, but that as I know that cannot be, I think it very ſtrange, you ſhould make uſe of this Impoſture, in all probabillity to force my ſecret from me, ſuppoſing I had one. This is no Impoſture, Madam,* the Cardinal replyed, *'tis matter of Fact, and of which you your ſelf are going to be a Witneſs. I have the Letter at I told*

you

you in my Pocket, and there needs no more then my taking it out. The Dutcheſs without affording her ſelf the time to ſee it, thinking that he meant that it was ſhe that had writ it, *It muſt be forg'd then,* ſhe retorted, *and as I know you capable of ſuch a forgery, you muſt not take it ill if I tell you that my ſuſpicions only center in your Perſon.*

Theſe words, which let the Cardinal ſee, the little eſteem ſhe had for him, had like to have made him mad. *I uſe not, Madam,* ſaid he to her, *any of thoſe ſort of Tricks, and my Misfortune is but too reall and too True.* At theſe Words he preſented her the Letter, we have been talking of, and the Dutcheſs ſeeing it a hand very different from hers. *What's the meaning of all this?* ſaid ſhe to him, *and did you not tell me that your were a going to ſhew me a Letter of mine: I ſaid no ſuch thing,* the Cardinal made anſwer, *but that I would ſhew you a*

Love-Letter that was written to you. Do but open it, he added, *and you will see, that it is not Love that you Shun, but the Persons that Love you, when they are so dis-agreeable to you as I am.* Tho' nothing could be more dis-obliging then this reproach, the Dutchess nevertheless, was much less sensible to it, then to the pleasure of seeing that she was under Cover from those forgeries, which as gross as they were, do howeversometimes create trouble. *Lets see*, said she to him, in much colder blood, than in Probability she was like to be in, *whence this Love-Letter comes to us, for my part I know not who can have Written it to me, & still less, who can have made use of a Stile, by which one may guess of our good Correspondence.* At these words she open'd the Letter, whose hand she was a stranger to, but she could not disown it to be from the Count *de Soissons*, which was manifest from the Signing, which

was

was really his.

This was the Letter, I before mention'd. Thus it would be needleſs to renew what it contain'd, ſince I acquitted my ſelf of that before. This I may ſay, that it was fatal to the Cardinal to ſerve his Rival inſtead of injuring him. I ſaid before that he it was that had occaſion'd his having dar'd to declare his Paſſion to Madam *d'Elbœuf*. It was alſo he, who by obliging that Lady to read this letter, caus'd her to make reflexion that this Prince muſt needs be in love to refuſe the Advantages that were offer'd him by the Marriage of Madam *de Comballet*. Tho' ſhe was in the Preſence of a jealous Man, who examin'd her, as I may ſay, to the bottom of her ſoul, ſhe in a moment told her ſelf a thouſand things to the Count's advantage, and it ſo much the more ſtartled her, as that ſhe was wont to make a ſcruple of thoſe that would

would not have been of any Conſequence for Others. However not being ſo far ſunk into theſe ſorts of Reflexions, but that ſhe had the Judgement left to ſee that ſhe was to anſwer the Cardinal upon this Letter, ſhe let him ſee the injuſtice of his Accuſation, ſince if it had been true, that ſhe had been in as good terms with the Count as he had ſuppoſed, he would have written to her in other terms than he did.

Two or three hours ſlipt away in this and the like Altercations, with which the Cardinal had no greater reaſon to be ſatisfy'd. At the end of that time, the Duke *d'Elbœuf*, who had giv'n his Memoirs to Mr. *Deſnoiers*, return'd, and thus chang'd the Converſation. If that Prince had had the leaſt Suſpitions, he had needed only to have ey'd either of them, to ſee that they had Concerns in their heads; but being far from

any

any such thought, he propos'd to the Cardinal the going to see the Water-works Play, and his Eminence fearing he might discover his Disorder in Conversation, was overjoy'd that he had this Curiosity, that so he might come off from that bad step.

Then the Duke return'd to *Paris* with his wife, and some days after the Dutchess of *Savoy* sent a Courrier to the King to entreat him to send her the Queens Picture in Miniature, with that of all the Ladys of the Court. She meant to put them in a Cabinet, which she had caus'd to be made on purpose in one of the Duke of *Savoys* Country-houses; and she had made the like Request at all the Courts of *Europe*, that so without stirring from her own home, she might see all that was Beautifull in *Europe*. The King was far from denying the Dutchess this. A Painter came from *Italy*, who

drew all these Ladyes, and their Pourtraicts being finisht, the King took a view of them, then put 'em into the Courriers hands, who was come to *Paris* on purpose to fetch 'em. All the Princes and Grandees of the Court, found not any handsomer than that of Madam *D'Elbœuf*, and that Princesse added a Box of Diamonds thereunto, which she was very willing to make a Present of to the Dutchess of *Savoy*. The Count *De Soissons* and the Cardinal who had done all they had been able with the Painter to get him draw a Second by it, but which he had excus'd himself from, upon his not drawing any Copies, and that Madam *D' Elbœuf* would not consent that he should draw two Originals, they resolve to have it at any rate whatever. The Cardinal, who was all full of finesse, invented a means for that purpose, which he thought indubitable,

which was to have the Courrier robb'd, when he was passing thorough a Wood. For this purpose he sent Spies abroad and they were to wait his coming in the Forrest of *Fontainebleau*.

As concerning the Count *de Soissons*, he manag'd his design with less artifice, on the evening before the Courriers Departure, he went to him *incognito*, told him it should be his own fault if he did not make his fortune, and to shorten matters he offer'd him ten Thousand Crowns ready Cash, if he would give him Madam *D'Elbœufs* Picture. Such offers are very capable of tempting a Miserable Courrier, he said he was willing, and resolv'd to say when once arriv'd in *Savoy*, that he had been robb'd on the way. This Bargain being thus struck, the Courrier departed the next day, and when he was in the Forrest of *Fontainbleau*, four Horse-men surrounded

him, (being those of the Cardinals) and askt to search his male. There are those that do not love such sorts of Encounters, nay and that Number must be reduc'd to very few, since all People are of this Opinion; but this man having his reasons not to be of the tast of all others, open'd his Male with mighty Satisfaction, letting them see that he carry'd neither Gold nor Silver, but things indeed of greater vallue. They Examin'd Every Pourtraict in its turn, and not finding that they sought for: Where is then that of Madam *D' Elbœufs* they ask'd him? He perceiv'd by this Question by Whom they had been sent, and as he was afraid of Violence, he made them answer that they came too late, if they only sought for that: That he had met with such Other Sparks as themselves, in the Plain of *Song-boiou* that has Seiz'd on it, on which account he had

been

been upon the point of returning to *Paris* to make his Complaint. In the mean while that he knew very well why ſo many People were ſo fond of that Picture, that it was on the account of the Box, which, however, thoſe that had taken it might repent of; ſince ſuch things, commonly diſcover'd ſuch like Perſons.

If the Courrier had had to do with real Robbers, he would have been Cautious how he had talk'd in this manner; but as he knew thoſe to whom he ſpoke, he was willing to give a looſe to his Wit, which they were much leſs concern'd at, than at their having ſped ſo ill in the Commiſſion that had been given them. In the mean while, they really believ'd all that he told them of the loſs of the Picture, remaining Perſuaded that it was the Box that occaſion'd his being robb'd. Full of this Imagination they return'd back to

give an Account to the Cardinal; but this Minister being cunninger then they, told'em they were fools, and that if the Courier had really lost the Picture, he would not have fail'd to have return'd to *Paris*, tho' it were only for the sake of the Box. Thereupon he caus'd a Person to be call'd in, in whom he put great Confidence, bid him take the Best of his Horses, go instantly in pursuit of the Courrier, and if he could overtake him, to clap a Pistol to his throat, to make him Confess what he had done with the Picture. This Person departed immediately, and Spurring his Horse at the first, he went Thirty Leagues in Six hours time; which was an Extraordinary Expedition; and which he must have fall'n much short of, had he taken Post. But at length his Horse being not able to go any further, he was oblig'd to take Post, and leave him in an Inn.

However

However the time which the others had ſpent in returning to *Paris*, having afforded the Courier a great advance, he arriv'd at *Lyons* Six hours before the other could get thither, and as when one is got thither it requires but little time to get out of the Kingdom, He that the Cardinal had diſpatcht ſtopp'd there judging it then too late to purſue the other. As much as he had been fed with hopes in his going, as full was he of ſadneſs in returning; for, in ſhort, he knew the Cardinal, who without doing any juſtice, would have thoſe he Employ'd to remain reſponſible for Unhappy Events. And indeed, he was no ſooner arriv'd, but that his Eminency having known that he had miſs'd his aim, he commanded him never to come more into his ſight, as if it had been his fault. Every One was curious to know of this Man, what Occaſion'd his Diſ-

grace; but as he was ſtill in hopes of being re-inſtated, he was cautious of blabbing, after which he had been loſt paſt recovery.

The Dutcheſs of *Savoys* Courier being return'd to her, this Princeſs, who had receiv'd a Letter of Civility from Madam *D'Elbœuf* upon the Pourtraict-Box ſhe ſent her, ask'd him what was become of it, as well as the Picture. To which the Courier made anſwer, that he had been robb'd of both in the Forreſt of *Fountaine-Bleau*, and that he had Witneſſes of it. Theſe Witneſſes were People that had paſs'd, when he was ſtopp'd, and theſe having in their paſſing ſeen how he was made to open his Mail, he had run after them, when he was again at Liberty, that they might give their Evidence upon time, and Occaſion. The Dutcheſs of *Savoy* was much vex'd at this Adventure, not ſo much, however, in Conſideration

of

of the Box, as of the Picture. Nevertheleſs as the thing might be retriev'd, ſhe gave Madam *D. Elbœuf* notice of the Couriers bad rencounter, entreating her that ſhe would remedy it, by cauſing her ſelf to be drawn anew. The Spy, the Cardinal had about the Dutcheſſe, inform'd him of what paſs'd, and his Eminency was very much Surpriz'd to hear that the Courier affirm'd the Pourtraict to have been taken from him in the Forreſt of *Fontainbleau*. He ſent immediately to ſeek out thoſe whom he had given order to go thither, and having ask'd them the meaning of all this, he knew by their anſwer, that the Courier muſt needs have diſpos'd of it himſelf, and that he had been glad to reject the thing upon them, for the Concealing of his Roguery. The witneſſes he had call'd upon that Occaſion, nay and whom he had caus'd to ſigne

a Paper, which he had put into the Dutchess of *Savoys* hands, confirm'd him strongly in this Opinion; and as he was perswaded that he had dispos'd of it in favour of no other than of the Count *De Soissons*, the first time he met that Prince; *I should never have thought*, said he to him, after a Drolling manner, *that you would have given Occasion of Complaint to a Beautifull Lady. Madam* D' Elbœuf *will needs have it, that you have her Picture, and she is not at all Satisfi'd that you detain it against her will. Madam D' Elbœuf*, the Count made him answer, *has no such thought of me, and she rather believes it to be the Person that has discourst her of Love, and has had the Boldness to Expresse his jelousie to her by a Letter.*

These Words absolutely Unhing'd the Cardinal; he was ignorant of his having discover'd his Intrigue by the Letter I mention'd awhile ago, and thinking it

to be Madam *D'Elbœuf* that had imparted it to him: *Madam* D'Elbœuf *has reason*, he ſaid to him, *to confide a Secret in you, and diſcreet as you are, it was impoſſible ſhe could put it into better hands.* *Madam* D'Elbœuf the Count made anſwer, *does not pretend to make a Secret of that, It is only a Secret when things pleaſe, and I ſhould looſe above half of the Eſteem I have for her, if ſhe had the leaſt taſt for that I ſpeak of.*

Then he went away and left the Cardinal ſo picqu'd, that he was not to be known again. And indeed, however great his wit was, it was too much at a time for him to have a Rival that ſlighted him in his own Preſence, and a Miſtreſſe by whom he thought himſelf Sacrific'd. Affairs of State went not the better, during his being in this Perturbation of mind, and as he knew himſelf incapable of directing them in due manner, as long as his mind was in that

Scite,

Scite, he counterfieted Sickneſs for two or three days, and would have done ſo much longer, if he had not been relieved by a deſire of revenge which he thought in his Power to Exert. I have ſaid that the Dutcheſs of *Savoy* had entreated Madam *d'Elbœuf* to ſend her her Picture a-new, they were actually at work upon it, and he gave his ſpies order to give him Notice when it was finiſht, and by whom it was to be ſent into *Savoy*. The Spy having performed his Commiſſion, the Cardinal caus'd two men to be ready to take Poſt at the ſame time as he that was Encharg'd with it, and that no body might have notice of the Robbery he pretended to Commit, he commanded them to follow him to the very frontiers of *Savoy*. There they Seiz'd him, and that they might not give him any Occaſion to believe that they only aim'd at the Picture, they likewiſe

likewiſe took all his Money away. The Courier, who was a *Savoyard*, being arriv'd at the other Poſt, made his Complaint to the Juſtice, but as he had no Money to have the Robbers purſu'd, they return'd in all ſafety to *Paris*, where the Cardinal gave each of them a thouſand Piſtols, for a Reward of their Pains.

The Dutcheſs of *Savoy* knowing the Accident that was again befall'n the Courier, did not think Convenient to re-demand a new Picture, and the rather as being in hopes of repairing ſuddenly her ſelf into *Dauphine*, to Confer with the King her Brother. She was then in hopes to ſee Madam *D'Elbœuf*, and acquaint her her ſelf with what fatality ſhe had been depriv'd of her hopes, entreating her to remedy it by a new Preſent.

In the mean while, the Cardinal having the Picture in his hands

hands, ſent for the Man of moſt repute in *Paris* for making of Boxes, and having caus'd him to enter into his Cloſet, he told him that he would make his fortune, if he had the Wit to do him a Service he deſired of him. The Man did not fail to promiſe him all things, and the Cardinal being aſſured of his Good Will; *You muſt then*, ſaid he to him, *make me a Picture-Box, the richeſt you ever made, and Expoſe it to the Eyes of thoſe that come to ſee you, untill that the Count de* Soiſſons *be enform'd of it. He will, doubtleſs, have the curioſity to know whoſe it is; but have a Care how you tell it him; Excuſing your ſelf upon it's being abſolutely forbidden you, and that it belongs to a Perſon ſo Conſiderable, that you ſhould be undone without recovery, if you fail'd in what he had Commanded you. Shew him only, but after ſeveral Importunities, and that he ſhall have Sworn to you that he*

will

will never mention it to any Body, the Picture I mean to put into it; and at the ſame time he gave him that of Madam *D'Elbœuf*.

The Man having promis'd him to do all he Commanded him, he gave him to the value of two hundred thouſand Crowns in Diamonds, with which he was minded the Box ſhould be enrich'd, recommending to him never to ceaſe working. The workman laid all other Bus'neſs aſide for this; and thoſe that ſet him to work, preſſing him to ſerve them, he told them that it was impoſſible; that he had ſomething to do for a Perſon, of ſuch great Conſideration, that he was oblig'd to work for him to the prejudice of all the World. People had the curioſity to know, what this bus'neſs was, and for whom it might be, to which he anſwer'd, that it was a Box of Diamonds; but, that as for the Perſon,

ſon, he was forbidden to name him. If the King had been a Prince Gallant, People would have believ'd not only by this man's Diſcourſe; but by the worth of the Diamonds, which he ſhew'd to all comers, that it was for him he Workt; but as that Prince led a Life altogether retir'd; and that beſides Kings are too much Expos'd to the Eyes of the Publick, to have any Intrigue out of the Verge of their knowledge, they were oblig'd to let their ſuſpicions fall upon another. In the mean while, all *Paris* was quickly full of this Bus'neſs, and it being come to the Ears of the Count *de Soiſſons*, he fancy'd, that ſince he knew the Jeweller, and whom he commonly ſet to Work, that he would not be ſo Myſterious with him. In confidence of this, he went to him, and after having askt him to ſee that Rarity, which made ſuch a noiſe in

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the World, he was himſelf induc'd to admire it, not ſo much on the account of the Richneſs of the Diamonds, as of the Miniature which was admirable. *This is very fine, truly,* ſaid the Count *to him, and if the Picture that is to be in it has ſomething proportionate, We muſt needs own that nothing can be comparable to it. And that too is beyond all doubt*; the Jeweller repartee'd; *But tho' it were not ſo, Your Highneſs knows very well, that Lovers ever eſteem their Miſtreſſes. By this anſwer, I judge,* the Count *de Soiſſons* reply'd, *that the Lady does not merit this Expence; but thou ſpeakeſt very juſt, in ſaying, that what pleaſes us is ever the handſomeſt to us. I ſaid not that,* the Workman anſwer'd, *with Relation to the Lady here in Queſtion; as ſhe appears the moſt Beauteous to the Eyes of him that ſet me to Work, ſhe will alſo appear ſo doubtleſs to all thoſe that ſhall ſee her. For my part I*

own that I never saw any thing that ravisht me more, and if I was King, I believe he that employs me would have a dangerous Rival in me. By what I perceive, the Count retorted, *you do not then work for him. I thought from the Vastness of the Expence, that he only was capable of it; but since I am Mistaken, you must needs tell me for whom it is. That is impossible,* the Workman made answer, *I have made Oath not to reveal the least tittle; and besides, the being thereunto bound by my Conscience, it concerns no less than my Life. What,* the Count repartee'd, *Cannot I then secure thee, and when thou shalt say that I it was that oblig'd thee thereunto, dost thou not think, that they will be very Cautious, since it is not the King, how they exercise any Violence upon thee. I know Sir,* the Workman reply'd, *the respect all the World ought to have for you; but you'le be pleas'd to give me leave to tell you,*

that

that whatever protection you may grant me, my Life would not be in safety, if I had broke the Secret I had promis'd.

The more the Workman enlarg'd in the like Discourse, the more it flusht the Counts Curiosity to discover this Mystery; but what augmented it the more is, that hearing him talk in this manner, he began to entertain a Suspicion that it might be the Cardinal. He thought that he only could be dreaded to such a Degree as to slight the Protection of a Prince of the *Blood*; joyn'd to this, that he only could put Jewels of such great Value upon a Picture Case.

All this Confirming him still more and more in his Opinion, he did all he could to tear the Secret from the Jeweller; but he being cautious of going beyond his orders; continuing still upon the Defensive, the Count contented himself

himſelf with asking him to ſee the Picture. The Jeweller wav'd doing it for ſome time. At the long run, as if he had yielded partly to his entreaties, and partly to ſeveral great promiſes he made him, he went to fetch a little trunck that contained what he required. The Count full of impatience, Snatcht it out of his hands, with the key, and opening it himſelf, he found at the top, a Picture in a Chagreen Caſe. He ask'd the Jeweller if that was what he ſought for, and the other having anſwer'd him in the affirmative, he undid two little Claps that hindred him from ſeeing that Picture. As ſoon as he had caſt his eyes upon it, he had like to have let it fall, ſo ſtrangely ſeiz'd was he, and beginning to eye the Workman: *What's this I ſee*, ſaid he to him, *and is it poſſible that the Caſe thou art making is for the Picture I have in my hands? It is for the very ſame Sir*, the

the Jeweller made anſwer, *But whence proceeds ſuch a Surprize, ſince your Highneſs might well imagine that it was for a Perſon whoſe Condition was Equal to her Beauty.*

The Count did not think Convenient to tell him through what Motive he was ſo affected; but detaining the Picture; *Make me no longer any Miſtery of the matter,* ſaid he to the Jeweller, *I know as well as thee Who ſet thee to work, and ſince it is the Cardinal, go tell him from me, that as I know him Unworthy of the favour the Ducheſs* D' Elbœuf *has done him, I do not pretend he ſhall injoy it. Tell him alſo that he be very carefull never to let this Bus'neſs be known, which would ruine that Princeſſe's Reputation; I own that after ſo ſhamefull a Choice in her, ſhe does not deſerve it ſhould be in any wiſe ſpar'd; but if I do it, it is perhaps, more in Conſideration of her Husband than of her. After all, if he is ſo hardy as to do any thing to*

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the Prejudice of what I Signify to him, he shall be answerable for it to me.

The Jeweller was very much Surpriz'd when he heard him talk in this manner: He had indeed, order to shew him the Picture, but not to let him take it. Thus already thinking himself undone, he threw himself at the Counts feet, conjuring him to take pity of him. But this Prince whom jealousy did not allow to grant him his request, went out at the same time, giving him no other comfort then the telling him, that he was in Security sufficient being under the Cover of his name. The Jeweller all trembling went directly to the Cardinal, acquainted him how the thing had pass'd, and letting him understand, that having to do with a Prince of the Blood, it was impossible for him to do in his regard, what he would have done in regard of any Other. In the mean while the Poor man was

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under a Mortal Apprehenſion how he would treat him after this, but he was as greatly Surpriz'd, when inſtead of ſeeing him burſt out into menaces, he ſaw him burſt out into a great fit of Laughter. *So much the Better*, the Cardinal ſaid to him at the ſame time, *Nothing more acceptable could have befall'n me, and all I expect of thee is, thou wouldſt tell the Count, that I have threatned thy Life, unleſs thou bring'ſt me back my Picture. I know very well*, added he, *that all Thou canſt ſay to him will be ineffectuall: but again no matter, provided he thinks me much more angry than I am.*

The Jeweller not expecting to have come off at ſo eaſy a rate, promiſed him all he had a mind to, and the Cardinal having inſtructed him more at length of what he was to do, he went to find out the Count *De Soiſſons*, and told him, there was no ſafety for him, at leaſt without bringing back the Picture.

Picture. Whereupon he made all the faces and Grimaces requiſite to work upon him, but the Count, who would ſooner have given his Life than have reſtor'd it, made him anſwer, that it was all in vain he thus tormented himſelf; that he advis'd him as a friend not to inſiſt upon it any longer, and to contrive ſome expedient to get himſelf off from the Bus'neſs. Nevertheleſs to appeaſe him, he made him a preſent of a Thouſand Piſtols, telling him, that had he finiſht his work, he would not perhaps, have got ſo much. The workman pretended to be very much vex'd, but nevertheleſs was not ſuch a fool as to refuſe the Mony. He took it however Conditionally, and repairing again to the Cardinal, he was by him recompenc'd ſtill more largely than by the Count, for having acted his part ſo well.

The Dutcheſs *D' Elbœuf* was all this

this while ignorant of this Comedy, which to her would have been mighty matter of Vexation, since upon the noise it might make, she was not sure but that her Husband might possibly interpret things in the worst Sense. Nevertheless, she wanted not matter of trouble, since the Cardinal had shew'd her the Letter before-mention'd. She had made such Reflexions upon the Counts Person and Passion, as began to Entangle her. She, who before had only look'd upon him as a Person indifferent, found occasion to look upon him with more Attention. His refusal of Madam *de Comballet*, to whose Person so many Grandeurs were annex'd, appear'd to her an Instance of Love so much the more extraordinary, as that Persons of his Birth, do suffer themselves to be absolutely govern'd by their Ambition. Whereupon she told her

ſelf, that for the Love of her, he not only renounc'd the Quality of firſt Prince of the Bloud; but likewiſe to the Crown, that ſeem'd reſerv'd for him that ſhould poſſeſs that Quality. And, indeed, ſince that, as I have already ſaid, neither the King, nor the Duke of *Orleans* his Brother, had any Children capable of Succeeding them, it is beyond Conteſt that tho' at all times it is a great advantage to be the firſt Prince of the Bloud, it was a thing of much greater Moment at that Juncture.

Nothing is there ſo dangerous in a woman as the making of theſe ſort of Reflexions: Tho' they do not abſolutely level her Virtue, yet they ſo ſtagger it, that upon the leaſt jogg afterwards ſhe runs a great riſque of being undone. The Ducheſs being not ignorant of the Precipice before her, did all that was poſſible for her to avoid it. She ſet her

Husbands

Husbands Merit in oppoſition to that of her Love; and to lend her ſelf Forces, ſhe endeavoured to repreſent to her Heart that there was not ſo much Difference between them two, as that ſhe ought to be ſuſceptible of the Impreſſions that tormented her. Not content with thus repreſenting her Duty to her ſelf, ſhe ſhunn'd ſuch occaſions as might ruine the Reſolution ſhe had taken of conſerving her ſelf wholly to her Huſband. Where-ever ſhe fear'd meeting the Count, ſhe kept a-loof off as from a Contagious Place. She knew that what Preſerves Innocence, is avoiding the Occaſion. Yet this Courſe was very incommode to her, and the Queen began already to complain that ſhe no longer came to the Circle with the other Ladies of her Quality.

But how could ſhe repair thither, unleſs ſhe was minded to ſee

the Count? He who seeing her in no place, thinking that she could not, at least, dispense her self from making her Court to the Queen, went daily to that Princess's Lodgings, where he did all that was possible to conceal the ill humour he was in, as well because he found her not there, as because since the adventure of the Picture, he was possess'd that the Cardinal stood in better terms with her then any body. What still augmented his suspicion was, that Mr *d'Elbœuf* often oblig'd her to go to his Eminencies House, where he had Bus'ness still depending; and tho' this Princess would have been glad to have been dispens'd from going thither after what had befall'n her, yet she durst not tell him the Reasons she had for such a reluctance, because that must not only have ruin'd the Interests of their Family, but likewise because that all those sorts of

things

things are never gratefull to a Husband. Being poſſeſs'd with theſe Sentiments, ſhe made her viſits as ſhort as was poſſible for her; But had ſhe done no more than go in and out, the Count coming to know it, it was ſufficient to ſink him into Deſpondency: What ſtill further confirm'd him that there was a good underſtanding between them, was that the Cardinal granted the Duke *D' Elbœuf* a favour which he had long refus'd him, and which indeed, was not ſo much as juſtice. He at the ſame time imagin'd it to be the reward of the Compleiſance the Ducheſſe had for him, and could not ſufficiently admire how the Duke *D'Elbœuf*, who was a generous Prince, and all full of honour, did not open his eyes upon his Infamy.

Being in this anxiety, all his hopes aim'd at getting a particular Converſation with Madam

D'Elbœuf wherein to reproach her with the Shamefull Preference she gave the Cardinal to his Prejudice. It had not been so strange to him had she inviolably maintain'd her fidelity to her Husband; but to be faithless to him for a man of the Cardinals mein and Character, is what he could not bear. Being possess'd with such like Sentiments, he redoubl'd his care to meet her, but being as little able to effect it as before, he imagin'd that she shunn'd him out of fear of Creating a jealousy in the Cardinal, and that if he made semblance of Loving any other than she, that he should possibly speed better in his Intentions. It was sufficient for him that he had conceiv'd this thought to execute it; Nevertheless, as People ever flatter themselves in whatever estate they be, he would not that the Person he had in his eye to serve to his Designs, should be of the number

number of those that may Envy a man for being inconstant. On the Contrary he Chose her with so little merit and Beauty, that it was a wonder People did not find out there was only disguise in this Business. His reason was, that he was not willing that a Maid that might have a thousand good Qualities, should have Occasion to reproach him that he had made her to serve for a Laughing-stock to the whole Court: Besides that he told himself that since the Dutchess might perchance, fall off from the Passion he imputed to her for the Cardinal, he ought not to barr his admittance into her heart.

The she on whom he cast his eyes was *Mademoiselle de Chanmont*, Maid of honour to the Queen, a Person in truth of one of the Best Families in the Kingdom; but in whom all the other Qualitys were wanting saving Birth. First of all in respect of what was seen, she

had all the reaſon imaginable to Complain of nature: Far from being Beautifull, and well made: ſhe had a face and a ſhape, that warranted her from ever being the occaſion of an amorous ruine. As for the one ſhe was ſhort and thick; and as for the other, ſhe rather reſembled a Man then a woman. Beſides ſhe was Crimſon-fac'd and Copper-nos'd. And yet if neatneſs had been her talent, One might have ſaid, that ſhe had not been void of all ſorts of good Qualities; But as if ſhe had delighted in being ridiculous in all things; ſhe ever dreſs'd her ſelf like a Country Gentlewoman, for which her Companions rallying her one day before the whole Court, the Queen, who was one of the Beſt-natur'd Princeſſes in the world; *Forbear this*, Meſdemoiſelles, ſaid ſhe to them, Chaumont *ought to be ſo far from being your Laughing ſtock, that I will have you*

to

to know that she does you honour. If you doubt it, I must tell you that she has an Advantage, which none of you will ever have; which is, that she has the honour to be related to the King.

Such an Expression as this, and coming from the Queens own Mouth, Stopp'd all farther Drolling, how ridiculous soever she might appear in the eyes of all People. In the mean while the Count *De Soissons* was not Sorry at this Circumstance, that so it might at least be said, that if he did not Love a Maid of Merit, he Lov'd one of Quality. As soonas his Designs appear'd in the Eyes of the Court, not a Person was there, that was not Surpriz'd: They Imagin'd that thinking himself above the Queens Correction, he was minded to divert himself for a day or two; and that this Intrigue would quickly be at an End: But seeing that time Expired, and he still continuing

ruing to ſeek out *Mademoiſelle de Chaumont*, to take her aſide, and whiſper in her Ear, and in ſhort to do all that a man is wont to do when he loves a Nymph, they were oblig'd to ſhrug their Shoulders, as People commonly do, when they cannot find out the reaſon of what they ſee. And indeed, all that can be ſaid to this is, that Wiſdom being none of the *Inamorato's* Province, it is not to be Wonder'd that the Count *de Soiſſons* had laid it ſo much aſide. The thing was told to the Queen, who had already perceiv'd it her ſelf, and who knowing the weakneſs of the Sex, would have ſtopp'd the Courſe of it at the ſame Moment, but that ſhe was very willing to mortify her other Maids who after having ſlighted *Chaumont* ſo very much, were heartily vex'd to ſee her have a Lover of that Rank.

In the mean while, this Maid being

neither of Rock nor Brass, having taken fire at this Princes Discourses, she made some Assignations with him, wherein perchance, several things would possibly have pass'd, had he been minded to improve the Disposition he met withall to receive so deep an Impression in her mind. But he being far from any such thought, did in all those Occasions comport himself so secreetly, that saving the Noise it made among her Companions, she came off thence as sound and as whole as she went thither. These Maids being discreet after the mode of Courtiers, did not fail to proclaim it on all Occasions, and Madam *D'Elbœuf*, who had already heard some talk of this Intrigue; and yet without being able to give any Credit to't, by reason of the Young Ladies' little merit, was concern'd to such a degree as startled her. The truth is, she knew

knew very well that ſhe had a Conſideration for this Prince, but ſhe did not imagine it to be ſo ſtrong as to make her ſo uneaſy. Nevertheleſs being not able to overcome it, whatever repreſentations ſhe could make to her ſelf, ſhe appear'd ſad and Melancholly to her Husband, who askt her the Occaſion. She was cautious, as you may imagine, of informing him in that matter, and one while imputed it to a feign'd Indiſpoſition, another while to humours that cannot be ever Equal'd; but ſeeing ſhe could not ever put him off with ſuch like Excuſes, and that in the mean time, ſhe continu'd in her drooping Condition, ſhe entreated him to allow her to go take the Air in the Countrey.

The Duke *D'Elbœuf* found this Demand ſo Extraordinary that it put him into a mighty Amazement. He made her Anſwer, that

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in that, ſhe deſired a thing which far from diverting her, would only ſerve to feed her Melancholly; that ſhe would do much better in going often to the Queen, where ſhe would meet with opportunities of pleaſantly whiling away her time. And that ſhe might not come to be dejected by her anxiety, he induc'd her to go thither at that very inſtant. The Ducheſs did not ſtand upon much entreaty, & the eaſier was ſhe prevail'd upon, for that ſhe imagin'd two things muſt needs be her ſecurity. One the Love the Count had for *Chaumont*, the Other the Reſentment ſhe had to ſee her ſelf forgotten for ſuch a Maid as ſhe. For in ſhort, tho' ſhe was exempt from moſt of the weakneſſes that are ſo uſual in thoſe of her ſex, ſhe did not differ from them in one thing, namely, that ſhe was not vex'd, that People lov'd her, principally when they were

Perſons

Persons of Merit Being come to the Queen, she receiv'd Reproaches from her Majesty, upon the account of her not seeing her, for which she contriv'd some sorry excuses, with which the Queen did nevertheless remain satisfy'd. The Count *de Soissons* came in a moment after, and having seated himself by the Dutchess, *It is a miracle, Madam,* said he softly to her, *to find you here, sure my Lord the* Cardinal *is a Coming, otherwise we should never have had the honour of seeing you in this Place.*

Madam *D' Elbœuf* blusht at these words, but that not making her lose a presence of mind, which she possess'd in a most peculiar manner; *Have a care, Sir,* she made him answer, *of* Mademoiselle de Chaumont's *perceiving you So fine a Conquest is too Dear a Purchase not to husband it; she'le be undoubtedly jelous, and the more, for that, possibly, she knows it is not*

long

long ſince you were upon a ſtrain of Courtſhip with me. The Queen, who was this while talking to a Lady, returning then again to Madam *D'Elbœuf*, this Converſation was thus let fall; but tho' it was very ſhort, yet it led both of 'em to make great Reflexions.

To what purpoſe theſe reproaches, ſaid the Count in himſelf, *unleſs ſhe be toucht at my Proceedings. Few meddle in other Peoples matters, unleſs ſet on by ſome ſelf-concern. And, perhaps, I am not ſo indifferent as I imagine, to this Lady.* The Dutcheſs Entertain'd her thoughts much in the ſame manner, and while they were both buſy'd in theſe Reflexions, the Count went and plac'd himſelf in a Corner, whence he might view the Dutcheſs, who on her ſide, ever and anon darted him a look. While he was in this Poſture, in came *Mademoiſelle de Chaumont*, and being far from imagining

imagining that he thought of any other than her, ſhe ſtole ſofily behind him, and gave him a tap upon the ſhoulder. Madam *D Elbœuf* having her Eyes turn'd that way, perceiv'd it, and this would ſenſibly have vex'd her, had ſhe not perceiv'd that the Count *de Soiſſons*, after having turn'd his head towards her, turn'd again another way, as if he had not perceiv'd her. This Maid being downright in Love with him; This Action of his went to her very heart, and as ſhe was not ſo wary in her Demeanure, as another of more Wit would have been, ſhe pull'd him by the Cloak, and did all ſhe could to get him aſide, that he might give her the reaſon of this Contempt; but he repuls'd her ſo Cruelly, that ſhe went away with ſuch an Anguiſh of mind, as is difficult to be Expreſs'd.

Madam

Madam *D'Elbœuf* ſaw all this plainly, without taking the leaſt notice, and tho' ſhe was very glad of it in the bottom, yet it only ſerv'd to augment her diſquiet. True, indeed, that this diſquiet was of another kind than that ſhe was ſenſible of before. If ſhe told her ſelf but an hour before, that ſhe was unhappy in having an Eſteem for a Man, that Lov'd another, ſhe did not find that ſhe was the more happy in believing now that it was ſhe her ſelf he Lov'd. And to compleat her Trouble; her Husband did of late make her a thouſand Careſſes, even to the telling her ſeverall kind things that are ſeldom practis'd between a Husband and a Wife. Thus the leaſt thought that intruded into her head, that was contrary to her Duty, ſeem'd to her a Crime ſo horrible, that ſhe could not ſupport it. At her going from the Queens Lodgings, ſhe

ſhe return'd to her own home, and having found the Duke reading, ſhe ſnatcht away his Book, and threw her Arms about his Neck, as if ſhe meant to make him reparation for having dar'd to look upon any other than himſelf. The Duke receiv'd her Careſſes with great affection, and was ſo far from believing what paſs'd, that he told her Laughing, that they Lov'd one another too much for Courtiers; that they ought at leaſt to be carefull not to ſhew it ſo much before the World, ſince it might be capable of affording matter of talk. Theſe words caus'd the Dutcheſs to ſigh in Secret, and the Confidence her Husband did ſo unſeaſonably harbour, troubled her afreſh.

To render her ſelf Worthy of him, ſhe did all ſhe could to tell her ſelf that it was *Chaumont* the Prince Loved; but tho' ſhe had been minded to abaſe her ſelf any longer,

longer, it would have been impoſſible for her to have done it, ſince that this Prince broke off with that Maid of Honour, but after a manner ſo diſobliging, that thoſe who thought he had really Lov'd her, plainly perceiv'd their Miſtake. This Maid at her going out of the Queens Chamber, went to wait for him in the Anti-Chamber, her heart ſo piqu'd at what had befall'n her, that without conſidering that ſhe had Enemies that obſerv'd her Conduct, ſhe had plac'd her ſelf in a Corner, where keeping her Noſe in her Handkerchief ſhe had ſhed an infinity of Tears. Nevertheleſs ſhe ever and anon turn'd her head to watch his coming out, and having perceiv'd him, ſhe would needs have ſtopp'd him: But he walking on ſtill, as if he had not taken notice of her being there, ſhe was oblig'd to call out to him, *Go not ſa faſt Mr.*

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le Count, I have a Word to ſay to you. This Prince was oblig'd to turn his head about at theſe words; but having other matters to do, than to ſpeak to her; *Pardon me, Mademoiſelle,* ſaid he to her, *if I cannot ſatisfy you for the preſent, I have ſomething that calls me elſewhere, and it ſhall be for another Occaſion.* After this he pretended to have gone his ways; but ſhe ſtopping him by the Cloak, drew him againſt his will to a Window, where ſhe began to load him with ſo many Reproaches, that to prevent the being any longer expoſed thereunto for the future, he reſolved to undeceive her. But as he had the Civility not to State the Caſe flat and plain to her, ſhe would by no means apprehend them. Inſomuch that ſeeing he loſt his time; *This is too much, Mademoiſelle,* he ſaid to her, *and ſince you will have me ſpeak outright, I adviſe you to ſeek for another Lover.*

For

For I can no longer love you, and without its being neceſſary for me to tell you why, I have my reaſons to leave you. You leave me, anſwer'd *Chaumont* all in a rage, *no, faith, but you ſhan't, and you muſt not have engag'd me to love you, if you meant to have play'd me ſuch a Pranck. I ſhall make my Complaints to the Queen, and we ſhall ſee if ſhe will allow you ſhou'd put ſuch an affront upon a Relation of the Kings.*

This Anſwer gave the Count Compaſſion at her fooliſhneſs, and fearing ſhe might be ſo ſilly as to do what ſhe ſaid, he remonſtrated that no ſurer means were there to diſhonour her ſelf then to do as ſhe pretended. Any Maid that had had but ſo much as a grain of good ſenſe would have told her ſelf the ſame, without it's being neceſſary for him to have put her in mind of it; but ſhe, notwithſtanding ſo faithfull a Counſel running only upon her own head, went

went and threw her ſelf at the Queens feet, whom ſhe beſought to do her Juſtice. After ſuch a Requeſt not a Perſon was there but imagin'd that ſtrange things had paſs'd between 'em; and, indeed, the Queen and the whole Court were at firſt of the ſame Opinion, and Madam *d'Elbœuf* having Intimation of the thing, endeavour'd more than any body to imprint it in her Belief, that ſo it might be a kind of Antidote to the Paſſion ſhe was ſenſible of for him, notwithſtanding all ſhe could do to hinder it. But ſhe quickly perceiv'd there was more ſillyneſs than Lewdneſs in that Girle, and ſhe with ſo much Innocence told the Queen after what manner things had paſs'd, that one muſt not have been over-clear-ſighted to accuſe her of Diſguiſe.

As ſhe could not after this ſtay any longer at Court, at leaſt without ſerving for a Laughing-

ſtock

ſtock to all People, the Queen contriv'd to marry her to a *Normand*, who being a man of Petty Quality, and yet very willing to paſs for quite another than he was in the world, ought to repute himſelf as honoured in marrying a Maid whom the King own'd for his Relation. This was the Bait that tempted him, the Queen adding a Preſent thereunto, after which they were married. The *Normand* fed himſelf that the Children he was going to have by ſuch a Wife would be of ſo good a Family, that there would not be one in the Province that could go cheek by jowle with them. Nay, and he thought that without waiting 'till that time, he might do like Perſons of the higheſt Quality. He took Pages as well for himſelf as for his Wife; and without conſidering that what had paſs'd at Court would reach *Normandy*, his thoughts were wholly

ſet upon playing the Great Lord among his Bumpkins.

After an Illuſtration of this Nature, the leaſt ſuſpicion not remaining in the Ducheſſe's mind, it came to paſs that her Melancholly augmented ſtill the more, upon her knowing that ſhe was the only Perſon beloved by the Count. This Prince on his part ſuffer'd himſelf to be overwhelm'd with his Grief, continuing to believe that he had a beloved Rival, wherein the Cardinal endeavour'd to keep him, as well for the Pleaſure of ſeeing him Jelous as well as himſelf, as out of a certain Averſion he had ever born him, and which had ſtill been wonderfully augmented, ſince their Vows had appear'd for one and the ſame Object. This Cardinal who took delight in impoſing upon all the World, had not any greater Pleaſure, than when he could accoſt Madam *D'Elbœuf*

in any place where he might be ſeen by the Count. Then, tho' moſt commonly he only diſcourſt her upon Indifferent matters, he manifeſted ſuch a Contentedneſs of mind, as had been ſufficient to allarum a Perſon of a much leſs jealous Temper than the Count's. But herein conſiſted his greateſt Addreſs, he order'd matters ſo, as to place Madam *d'Elbœuf* after ſuch a manner, as that this Prince could not ſee her face, by which he might have perceiv'd that ſhe gave him not ſo much occaſion to rejoyce.

The ſame thing befell the Count twice or thrice, and he was tempted to interrupt a Converſation that madded him to the heart. However the Reſpect he bore to Madam *d'Elbœuf*, rather than that he owed to the *Louvre* where this paſs'd, having witheld him, he watcht the time of her going out, and getting up ſo near her, as that

the reſt might not underſtand what he ſaid to her: *If Madam* d'Elbœuf *knew*, ſaid he to her, *that I have the Picture ſhe gave the Cardinal, perhaps ſhe would be afraid, that having in my hands wherewithall to convict her of Infidelity to her Huſband, that I would put him in mind that he ought no longer to ſuffer thoſe long Converſations ſhe has with that Miniſter, and ſtill leſs to ſend her to his Houſe upon the Pretence of Buſneſs.*

Madam *d'Elbœuf* was much ſurpriz'd at ſo unexpected a Compliment. Nevertheleſs the place and the People that might follow them not permitting her to illuſtrate this matter: *You tell me things*, ſhe ſaid to him, *which I can make no Anſwer to at preſent, but which I think of ſufficient Conſequence as to tell you, that if you will be a while hence at* Madam's, *I'le promiſe you to be there, and to give you reaſons for every thing you can deſire of me.* There needs

needs only one bare word to ſatisfy a Lover. The Count who thought himſelf the moſt Unfortunate of all men, made her a Bow, as if ſhe had reſtor'd him his Life, and having now no other Impatience, ſave for the coming of the Hour of repairing to *Madam's*, he went thither ſo early, that there was no Company there as yet. His Quality caus'd the Attendants to tell him that he might go to her very Cloſet; but he made them anſwer that he was not come to incommode her, and that he had wherewithall agreably to paſs away his time, until ſuch time as that ſhe was to be ſeen. At the ſame time he took a Book out of his Pocket, and the Attendants ſeeing he drew near a Window, and fixt his eyes upon it, they withdrew out of Reſpect, really thinking he deſign'd to read. But he no ſooner ſaw 'em out of the way, but that he employ'd his

mind in quite another thing than reading. He examin'd himself upon what he had to say to Madam *d'Elbœuf*, and he was so affected by the air of Goodness, with which she had made him answer, that he thought he could not without ill grace, say any thing Disobliging to her. But after having thus taken her part in his Heart, he took out of his Pocket the Picture he had taken from the Jeweller, and the remembrance he had that Madam *d'Elbœuf* had given it to another, overturn'd all the Resolutions he had newly taken.

As thoughts succeed one another in a moment, all this passed, as I may say, in a trice. And doubtless the later would have continued no longer than the former, if Madam *d'Elbœuf* had not come. This Princess, who did, indeed, expect that he would come betimes to the Rendezvouze, would

would not defer repairing thither, not only that she might have time to be thoroughly inform'd of what he had said to her; but, likewise, that she might do it before that *Madam*, who was daily wont to shew her self at one and the same hour, came out of her Closet. The Attendants made her the same Complement they had done to the Count *de Soissons*, but having made 'em answer, that she would discourse with him 'till that *Madam* came out, she went towards the place where he stood, and found him in so deep a musing, that he did not turn his head, 'till that she was just by him. He held her Picture still in his hands, and going to put it again into his Pocket: *What have you there, Sir*, said she to him, *and am not I come unseasonably to disturb the Pleasure you took in viewing that Pourtraict? There is indeed, Madam, a great deal in viewing it*, the Count made her

anſwer, *and I ſhould lye did I not grant it, but there is ſo little in remembring the Parties Cruelty, that if I was wiſe, I ſhould never think of her as long as I liv'd.*

Madam *d'Elbœuf* was come thither, upon what he had ſaid to her of her Picture; but as he had alſo told her at the ſame time, that ſhe had giv'n it to the Cardinal, and that ſhe very well knew the Contrary, ſhe ſo little ſuſpected that it might be hers he held, that ſhe almoſt loſt all Patience to hear him talk in this manner. Yet was ſhe far from letting him know how much it ſpighted her, & on the contrary pretending a freedom of mind which ſhe certainly had not; *It's uſual*, ſaid ſhe to him, *with Lovers to complain: Thus far from being ſurpris'd at this Diſcourſe of yours, I ſhould be much more ſurpriz'd if you talk'd otherwiſe. Let's only ſee whether there is as much Delight, as you ſay, in viewing your Miſtreſs,*

ſtreſs, and I aſſure you, that tho' I am not capable of having for her the ſame ſentiments you have, I ſhall nevertheleſs, render her ſo much Juſtice, as to own to you downright whether ſhe merits the Pains of your loving her. At theſe words ſhe reacht forth her hand to receive the Picture, and the Count making no difficulty of giving it her, ſhe was ſtrangely ſurpriz'd when ſhe ſaw it to be her own, nay and the ſame ſhe had caus'd to be drawn for the Dutcheſs of *Savoy*. She ask'd him immediately by what means it fell into his hands, not being able to forbear manifeſting her Amazement to him. But he interpreting her ſurprize altogether in a wrong ſenſe: *You have reaſon, Madam,* he ſaid to her, *not to be able to apprehend how it came into my hands, after having made a Preſent of it as you did to the Cardinal. It was ſo precious a Pledge that he ought to have taken more Care of it: Indeed,*

I told you a while ago, that I had matter to Convict you of Infidelity to your Husband, but God forbid, I ſhould harbour any ſuch thought, and if you knew what paſs'd in my Boſom, you'd be confident that I ſhou'd much ſooner Sacrifice my own Life, than put yours in Danger.

The Ducheſſe's aſtoniſhment augmented gradually as ſhe heard him utter theſe Reproches. She caſt her eyes from time to time upon this Picture, as if ſhe had thought ſhe had been miſtaken; Then when ſhe ſaw it was certainly the ſame, then ſhe ey'd the Count in all probability to ask him how he could come to have it in his hands. All this paſs'd in mighty ſilence, and the Count taking it for a Conviction of her being tardy; *Ah! Madam,* Cry'd he, *this Confuſion I ſee you under is too much for me. Why did ye not rather ſtand upon the Negative. All Eaſy as I am I ſhould have been the firſt to*

have

have deceiv'd my self, and d'ye not know that the greatest Misfortune for a Lover, is to be ascertain'd of his Misfortune? You take for Confusion, the Princess reply'd, *what is only an effect of my Surprize. I cannot comprehend how the Duchess of* Savoy, *to whom I sent this Picture, came to put it into other hands, and if she receiv'd it not, that she did not give me Notice, since she did of the first which was taken away by Robbers upon the Road? Phy, to others, Madam,* the Count retorted, *I am not so easily impos'd upon. You your self gave it to the Cardinal, but his Love is very small, since he has not employ'd his whole Credit to get it again out of my hands. I tell you again,* Madam d'Elbœuf reply'd, *that I cannot understand the least tittle of all you say to me: If the Cardinal told you I gave it him, whenever you please I'le give him the Lye before your face; but to spare so much Clutter, I should be very much oblig'd to you, if you'de content your self with*

ſending a Courrier to the Ducheſs o Savoy. *I'le write to her to diſcover this whole Myſtery; you ſhall ſee all I intimate to her, and as the Perſon that carries my Letter, ſhall be by your appointment, you cannot think to be deceiv'd.*

Nothing could be more obliging than this anſwer, and to take things aright, it ſpoke a certain Complaiſance for him, which a Woman never has, unleſs ſhe really eſteems a man. But he was ſo poſſeſs'd of his misfortune, that inſtead of taking things as he ought, he ſtill made freſh Reproaches. *I plainly perceive, Madam, the Reaſon,* he ſaid to her, *why you ſooth me up thus; you are afraid I ſhould make ſuch a noiſe as might undo you, and you endeavour to lull me aſleep by prolonging of time. But this ſhews you don't know me: for as I am incapable of any Baſeneſs, my Deſtiny will have me to love you, notwithſtanding that your Carriage renders you ſo unworthy of me.*

me. I tell my ſelf in ſpight of all my Concern, that your heart is your own, and that you may diſpoſe of it in favour of whom you pleaſe. Nevertheleſs, I know not whether it be Reaſon or ſelf-love, but methinks you might have diſpos'd of it in favour of a Perſon that would not have cauſed you to bluſh ſo much for ſhame.

The Ducheſs, tho' ſhe ought not willingly to have ſuffer'd ſo many Reproches, knew not yet whether ſhe ought to be vex'd, or take the Courſe of entring into new Juſtifications; but after having pardon'd him his firſt Sallies, being not able to ſuffer him to perſiſt therein, after what ſhe had ſaid to him, and the Offers ſhe had made him. *I'are i'th' Right*, ſaid ſhe to him, *and I love the Cardinal. After all do not People love out of different motives? And what hinders but that he may Conferr Benefits upon me and my Husband, He that has all thoſe of the Kingdom at his Diſpoſal.*

Theſe

Theſe are very ſordid views, the Count reply'd, *for a Princeſs of your Rank, and I can hardly believe your Husband will own you in 'em. It is not fit to tell ones Husband all*, the Princeſs retorted, *and ought not they to be much glad that we promote their Intereſts without telling 'em ought, and that we keep from 'em a ſecret, the knowing of which would thwart their Advancement and Repoſe?*

She ſaid this with a certain ſpightfull air, mingled with ſo much Diſdain, that if the Count had retain'd the leaſt good Senſe, he would have plainly perceiv'd that all ſhe did was meerly out of ſcorn. But the Property of Lovers being to blind themſelves, *I had indeed ever heard, Madam*, ſaid he to her, *that there were ſelf intereſſed Ladies, and that Princeſſes were not exempted no more than other People. But I knew not, that they took a Pride as you do, to boaſt of it. So ſingular a Sentiment ought to Cure me, and I*

bear

bear a mortal ill will to my ſelf for having eyes ſtill favourable for you after this. But no Madam, this will not laſt long, and I muſt be the pooreſt Spirited of all men, if I continued to love ſo Unworthy a Perſon.

The Dutcheſs *d'Elbœuf* ſeeing him in this rage, inſtead of falling her ſelf into the like, ſhe put on calmer looks and leſs full of Diſdain. *Your Carriage, does ſtrangely ſurprize me,* ſaid ſhe to him, *and if I only conſider'd you, I ſhould let you alone to believe all you pleas'd; But ſince my Honour is at ſtake, which you could never have a good Opinion of after this, I'le go directly to find out my Husband, and he ſhall know from the Cardinal, whether all you ſay be true. Ah! Madam, have a care of that,* the Count reply'd, *and can he make ſuch an Inqueſt as that, without diſcovering things that would diſturb his Quiet? Would he not know that the Cardinal loves you, and that I adore you? &c.* —— *Yes,* the Dutcheſs

cheſs interrupted, *but will he not know at the ſame time, that I abhorr the Cardinal, and that I do not love you? I know it very well, Madam, that you do not love me*, the Count renew'd, *and it's not neceſſary to tell me ſo. But can it be true that the Cardinal is no happier than I?*

Notwithſtanding the Dutcheſs's high Spirit, ſhe did not ſtick to inſinuate this truth into him, and what is more, ſhe did not keep up her Courage: I mean that in this coming to a Right underſtanding, the Count obſerv'd ſuch great marks of diſtinction, that he had occaſion to think himſelf happy. However the greateſt in my Opinion, was, that tho' he proteſted to the Dutcheſs that he remain'd fully perſuaded of her Innocency, ſhe would by no means he ſhould truſt to her word, obliging him to appoint her a Perſon in whom ſhe could put Confidence, to know of the Dutcheſs of *Savoy*, the whole unravelling

unravelling of this Myſtery.

This Converſation laſted 'till Company came, and a little after *Madam* came out of her Cloſet, on which account they could no longer continue their Diſcourſe. The Dutcheſs went away firſt, and after ſhe was gone, the Count ſtaid not long with *Madam*. He was overjoy'd at what had newly happen'd, principally when he made Reflexion, that he ought not only to lay aſide his Jelouſy, but further that Madam *d'Elbœuf* had ſpoke to him after a manner altogether obliging. As for her part, ſhe was far from being ſo well ſatisfy'd. Two things were there that made her in pain, and which nevertheleſs, were oppoſite to each other. One that ſhe had found the *Count* too agreeable, that is to ſay, her virtue did not agree with what ſhe was ſenſible of for him. The other, that he had not appear'd ſufficiently an *Inamorato*.

The

The fault she found in his Love, is, that after having giv'n her her Picture, he had not said so much as one word to her to have it again; which she could not reconcile with all the Instances of Affection he had manifested. *No, he does not love me*, said she to her self, *or, at least, if he has any kindness for me, it is so small, that it Creates him no great trouble. If he had been really in Love, would he have let such an occasion as that slip? He who thought me capable of having made a Present of it to the Cardinal, could not he presume that I would grant him that favour? Had not he a Right to demand it of me, since that he possess'd it, before he deliver'd it me? Besides could not he pretend he was afraid I would restore it to the Cardinal? Whence comes it then, that he has fail'd, unless it be that he cares not for it?*

This thought was follow'd with some Reflections upon the Infidelity of all Men in General, and sometimes

ſometimes alſo upon the Character of ſome, that delight in impoſing upon Ladies. She was infinitely afraid he might be of this laſt Number; nay, and very often for ought ſhe knew ſhe had reaſon to believe, that having inherited from his Anceſtors the averſion they had born to the houſe of *Lorraine*, of which was her Husband, he lay at watch to let it fall upon her, by provoking her to ſome weakneſs unworthy of a Virtuous Perſon, and of her Ranck, tho' he might afterwards make a Trophey of it. If theſe ſort of thoughts had come in after to her aſſiſtance, it is certain they were capable of baniſhing from her mind all that ſhe could ſay to her ſelf in favour of the Count; But as it is not Cuſtomary that ſuſpicions gain the Victory over Love, it is not to be wondered if a full Confidence did in a little time ſet her mind at Reſt.

What

What much contributed to this, was that after the Couriers return that was gone into *Savoy*, the Count being fully inform'd that he had wrongfully ſuſpected her, gave her ſuch convincing proofs of his Paſſion that one muſt have contriv'd to create trouble to one's ſelf, to have remain'd any longer in Diffidence. But if on one ſide ſhe recovered her Tranquillity, her Diffidence encreaſed on the Other, telling her ſelf inſtantly that it became her not to carry her ſelf in that manner towards her Husband, that had ſuch fine Qualities, as that when ſhe marry'd him, had made her incurr the Envy of all thoſe that might have pretended to him. Now theſe Reflexions being as I have newly ſaid, ever preſent to her mind, they wrought ſuch a Change in her humour, that ſhe became quite another Perſon, and was not to

be known again ev'n by thoſe that frequented her the moſt familiarly. Her Husband, who lov'd her with great Tenderneſs, was continually at her feet to ask her what ſhe ail'd, and as ſhe was far from making a Confident in a matter of that nature, and that, nevertheleſs, ſhe dreaded his finding it out ſhe thought Convenient to make him run riot. After ſeveral ſighs, whoſe ſource proceeded from quite another thing than what ſhe was going to alledge. *The Truth is, My Lord*, ſaid ſhe to him, *I wonder after ſuch a Carriage as yours, you ſhould ſtill ask me what I aile. Are you ignorant of the Kindneſs I have for you, and ſince you are perſuaded of it, d'ye not know that the frequent viſits you pay to my Lady Dutcheſs* d' Uſez *are capable of plunging me into ſtill far greater Diſquiets than thoſe I am now under.*

The Duke *d'Dlbœnf* was ſo good

good natur'd as to think ſhe ſpoke her mind, and preſſing her tenderly in his Arms; *How, Madam*, ſaid he to her, *Do you do me the injuſtice to believe that I can leave you for Another? D'ye find ſo little fondneſs in my Careſſes, that you think 'em almoſt at an End? Whence comes it that you ſpoke to me no ſooner of it? And ſince it lay in my Power to calm the troubles of your Mind, why did you not put my Affection to the Teſt before you accus'd me: Tho' I went ſo often to Madam* d' Uſez's *Houſe, that as it was leſs on her account then for the ſake of the Good Company I there met withal, ſo by Conſequence I ſhould not have been much concern'd to deprive my ſelf of ſeeing her, and all that I am vext at is, that you did not ask me a thing more difficult to grant you, I mean that for your ſake, there is nothing but what is eaſy to me.* This Proteſtation was followed with a thouſand ſuch tender Careſſes,

that

that Madam *d' Elbœuf* not being able to think how much to blame ſhe was to offend ſo Lovely and Complaiſant a Husband, became as motionleſs in his Arms.

The Duke perceiv'd it not at firſt, but at the long run, ſeeing that ſhe did not in any wiſe anſwer his fondneſs; *What ſignifies this, Madam*, he ſaid to her, *and were it true, as it is not, that I had really offended you, would not ſuch a Proteſtation as mine be Capable of putting it out of your Mind: With much more reaſon how much ought you to be Satisfy'd, who know my Innocence and my Love? For in ſhort you plainly ſee by the tenderneſs I now Expreſs to you, that I have all the Deſires of a Lover, and all the Amity of a Husband, what can you deſire more? As on my ſide, what can I deſire more but that you'd love me, as much as you know I love you?*

Theſe Tender and paſſionate diſcourſes were as ſo many ſtabbs with

with a Ponyard into that Princeſſes heart, and ſhe melting all into tears, took her Husband about the neck; the regret ſhe had for having offended him making her believe that ſhe really lov'd him. But tho' ſhe plainly perceiv'd that there was a great Difference between the Sentiments ſhe had for him, and thoſe ſhe had for the Count, ſhe reſolv'd, nevertheleſs, to make her Love give way to her Duty. *It ſhall not be ſaid*, cry'd ſhe to her ſelf, *that I no longer Love a Huſband that Loves me ſo Tenderly, for a Prince, that perhaps, in deed loves me, but who, however, has no Other deſign then his Pleaſure. Who knows if I was ſo baſe, as to grant him any favour, whether it would not paule him at the ſame Moment? Whereas* M. d' Elbœuf *loves me dayly more and more. Whence comes it that I do not make my Duty my Delight; and tho' ev'n the leaſt*

Weakneſs

Weakneſs ſhould not be an Occaſion of ſhame for a Princeſs, could I, I ſay, conceal from my Self the ſubject of my Confuſion, who ſhall ſecure me that the Conſequences will not be fatall to me; I, that from the little Experience I have, do know that trouble does Cloſely attend the leaſt falſe ſtep?

The having ſuch thoughts as theſe, was in ſome manner, returning to her Duty: Yet as the fear of what was to come had much contributed to the framing of them, Madam *d'Elbœuf* was very angry with her ſelf, that ſhe was not capable of taking ſuch as were more Noble and more lofty. This gave her to underſtand that notwithſtanding the Careſſes, with which ſhe cajoll'd her Husband ſhe did not love him ſo much as ſhe thought, and daily perceiving that this was but too true for her Repoſe, ſhe fell again under ſuch an affliction as is not poſſible to expreſs,

expreſs. The Count *de Soiſſons*, who lov'd her no leſs then her Husband, perceiv'd her Melancholly as much as the Other could have done, and the goodneſs ſhe had expreſs'd to him at the time when they came to a Right underſtanding; making him preſume that he might poſſibly diſcover the occaſion, he ſought her out with great eagerneſs, being fully reſolv'd to let her know how deeply he ſhar'd in it. The Occaſion offer'd it ſelf ſome few days after, He met her at the Dutcheſs of *Ventadours* houſe, to whom he went to pay a Viſit, and as if Chance would needs have favour'd him, it ſo happen'd, that while they were there one of that Ladies Children fell down Stairs, and was very much hurt. This being told to Madam *de Ventadour*; *Pardon me, Madam,* ſhe ſaid to Madam *d' Elbœuf, if ſuch an Accident as this Obliged me*

to

to leave you for a Moment. Excuſe the Tenderneſs of a Mother, I leave you with the Count, and I believe he will have the Goodneſs to Excuſe me in like Manner. Upon theſe words ſhe went out, leaving them all manner of freedom of diſcourſing together.

The Count meaning to avail himſelf of this happy moment, drew near Madam *d' Elbœuf* with the Confidence that might be created in him by the Converſation I intimated a while ago. But receiving him with a moſt Extraordinary Coldneſs; *If I did not follow Madam* d' Ventadour ſaid ſhe to him, *it was becauſe I was very willing to ſpeak two words to you, while I had time. Be ſo kind to me as never to tell me that you Love me, and if I have hitherto born with it, take my word I did it only on the account of the Suſpicion you had of me. Now that you cannot have any Left, My honour re-*

quires that I change my Conduct. I have besides several reasons, and by this I shall know whether you really love me. The Count was upon the point of telling her a thousand things to make her revoke this Order which he reckon'd Barbarous and full of Cruelty; But that Princess suspecting the Count would urge reasons upon reasons on this occasion, and not presuming so far upon her strength, as to believe she could stand such a Brunt as that, without danger, went immediately to find out Madam *de Ventadour*, and all his entreaties could not induce her to afford him one Moments Audience.

Unnecessary is it here to represent the Counts Grief and Astonishment. It is easy to imagine both, since I have already said he was infinitely in Love, and that he had conceived hopes in all points advantageous: however

as he fear'd that if he staid any longer in that place, it would be impossible for him to conceal the Disorder that Command had put him in, he went away instantly, his mind fill'd with so much Distraction, that when his Footmen ask'd him whither he would have his Coachman drive, he made them answer to Madam *d'Elbeuf*. And indeed he let himself be carried thither, without knowing whither he went, which he did not perceive 'till he was at the Gate. Then his Coachman stopping, and this Prince having had time to make Reflexion where he was, he remain'd for some time thinking what answer to make his Footmen, that came up to receive his Orders. At length having taken his Resolution, he bid them ask if *Mrs. d'Elbeuf* was at home, and when they brought him word he was, he mounted up in to his Apartment, and possess'd it

with what had befall'n him, that *Mr. d'Elbœuf* plainly perceiv'd that he had something extraordinary in his head. As they were intimate friends, without staying for his speaking of it to him; *Some Accident has befall'n you*, said he to him, *and if you fancied that I was capable of doing you Service, you was not mistaken in coming hither directly, since that I assure you that your Interests shall ever be as dear to me as my own. By what do you perceive that*, the Count made answer, who did not imagine that his Disorder appear'd so manifest as it did, and who besides pretended to conceal it from all People, and particularly from him. *By your Eyes*, the Duke reply'd to him, *by your Demeanour, by your Air; what shall I say to you in short, by your whole Person. They nevertheless deceive you*, the Count reparty'd; *But all I can say to you is, that I have been ill these two or three days. On this account have I resolv'd*

go for ſome time into the Country, and am come hither on purpoſe to take my leave of you.

The Duke by theſe words was ſtill more than before confirm'd in his Opinion, and imagining his Diſcontent to proceed from the Court, he having been his friend ſo long, and making him offers of Service, He could not forbear Expreſſing his wonder to him: But the Count ſtill continuing to tell him the ſame thing, they parted ſomewhat coldly on the Dukes Part, who could not reliſh his having this reſervedneſs to him, after they had been ſo intimate. However, that he might find out whether he gueſt aright, he took Coach as ſoon as the Count was gone, and repairing to the *Louvre*, he enquired under hand of thoſe he thought might be beſt inform'd, if any thing had befall'n the *Count*. But all were ignorant in the matter,

which put him in amaze, so that he return'd home; and presently after came Madam *d' Elbœuf*. *You are a stranger*, said he to her, *to a peice of News that will Surprize you, the* Count *goes away to morrow very much dissatisfy'd with the Court, and what's most strange, is, that he contented himself with coming to bid me Adieu, without acquainting me with the Occasion of his Discontent. I come now directly from the Louvre, whither I went to see if I could get any* Item *in the matter, but I found all there as much strangers to it as my self, so that I perceive his Disgrace is kept very Secret.*

Madam *D' Elbœuf* presently judg'd herself more concern'd in it than the Court: But as she was not fond of owning the matter, she fell to arguing upon the point, rather contriving to augment than to dissipate his Suspicions. Nevertheless when she came to be alone the Truth display'd it

self in its full Colours to her Minde. *'Tis for my sake*, said she, *that he banishes himself from Court, and after having occasion'd his renouncing of Grandures, which he might with a just Title have laid Claim to. Ought not I to have so much Consideration as to prevent the fatal Resolutions he may take, on my Account. What will he go do in his Solitude, or rather what must I do when I shall no longer see him?* She paws'd upon this Reflection, and never had she so much Occasion for her virtue as at that time. And indeed her Imagination represented this Prince as the most enamour'd of al men, asking her what he had done to occasion his being treated with so much Cruelty. *Is the Esteem he has for thee a Crime*, said she to her self, *& whereas thou ought'st to take it kindly, is it possible that thou canst doom him to Banishment? Couldst not thou be honest without reducing him to Despondency. This is all thy Hus-*

hand could ask of thee, and after all, canſt not thou be Miſtreſs of Love & Hatred? was it not ſufficient for thee that thou endeavoureſt to Love what thou doſt not Love, and endeavoureſt to hate what thou doſt not hate, whatever effort thou mayſt uſe?

She endeavour'd to conceal the Sadneſs ſhe lay under upon this news, for fear of her Husbands coming to know how far ſhe was concern'd in't. Ah! If ſhe durſt have writ to him, doubtleſs ſhe had done it to have made him break off his Departure; But the regard ſhe had for her Honour being ſtill more prevalent then all Other things, ſhe repell'd that thought that recoyl'd upon her ever and anon, and ſhe got the Maſtery of it at the long run.

In the mean while the Count *De Soiſſons* did not fail to depart the next day, and went to his Houſe *Blandi* ten Leagues from *Paris*, whence he would have gone

gone much farther, but that the Court might have taken umbrage at ſo precipitated a Retreat. There to diſperſe his Melancholly he fel to Hunting; but as that was not capable of eaſing his Diſquiet, he often ſtray'd all alone into the Woods, where alighting he ty'd his Horſe to ſome Tree, while thereby he lay muzing upon Madam *D' Elbœuf*. That he might think of her with the more pleaſure, he ever carry'd the Picture about him he had bought of the Courier, and which having in his Poſſeſſion, he had not minded to redemand the Other of that Princeſs. He took it out of his Pocket, and as if it could have given him a reaſon for her Cruelty, he made the moſt melting Complaints Imaginable. When he had continued a pretty ſpace of time in Conſulting it, he return'd again to his People, whom he made believe, he had loſt them through In-

advertency

advertency. Those days he went not a Hunting, he walk'd in a Grove adjoyning his Castle, without other entertainment than that of his sad thoughts which the love he had for Solitariness made him fond of harbouring.

Madam *d'Elbœuf* on her part pass'd her time as ill. That Princess's Passion was ever present to her memory, and especially the prompt Obedience he paid to her Commands. Yet did she use the faculties of her Mind to repell those thoughts, well knowing that the more she dwelt upon them, the more matter should she have to upbraid her self withal. *Unhappy Princess*, said she to her self, *Thy Husband then, it seems, is not worth the pains that thou shouldst think of him? How very well knowst, that thou can'st not think of any Other without being Criminal, and yet thou dost the quite Contrary of what thy Duty directs thee. What*

has the Count de Soissons, *that the Duke* D'Elbœuf *has not? Examine all well from one End to the Other, and thou wilt know that all the Difference thou puts between them, only proceeds from the Corruption of Nature? If the Count de* Soissons *was thy Husband, thou wouldst love the Duke* d' Elbœuf, *didst not thou love him, when he was no more then thy Lover, and for that thou hast held him a thousand times in thy Arms, must he seem less Aimable to thee than he formerly did? Beware of desiring to be in the same Condition with the Count, his Dislike would attend upon Enjoyment, and all that would remain to thee from thy Crime, would be so dismal a Confusion, that thou would'st not know where to hide thy self, much better is it that thou fall in again with thy Duty, and if thou intend'st that the Count should not lose the respect he has for thee, thou ought'st to be more Especially Solicitous to maintain thy Virtue.*

When she had urg'd such sort

of

of things as these to her self, she found her self very much eas'd, so far as to phancy she had nothing more to apprehend: But that to have effected, she should not have giv'n admittance to any other thoughts in her heart; from which not being able to refrain, it is not to be wondred if she was reduc'd ever and anon to stand the Brunt of new Conflicts. Nevertheless she made all possible resistance; yet as this could not be done, but to the prejudice of her health, she pin'd away in such manner as made it believ'd she must suddenly betake her self to her Bed. *Mr. d'Elbœuf*, whose Love far from having been subject to the distaste that seems annex'd to Possession, had been thereby the more augmented, not being able to see her in that Condition without an extreme Affliction, consulted all the Physicians that they might endeavour to afford

ford ſome Remedy to her Diſtemper. At laſt they concluded that Aſſes Milk would be good for her; but that to render it the more uſefull, it was neceſſary ſhe ſhould go take it in the Country. *Mr. d'Elbœuf* had a very fine Houſe two Leagues from *Paris*, but as his Dependence upon Court was ſuch as did not allow of his Abſence, he reſolv'd to ſend his Wife thither, that he might go ſee her every day, and thus at the ſame time gratify his Love and his Ambition. Madam *d'Elbœuf* was overjoy'd at the Preſcription of the Phyſicians, having no other kindneſs ſave for ſolitarineſs. She ſought out the moſt lonely Places, which that fine houſe had no want of, and they being to be truſted with the occaſion of her trouble, without fear of their revealing it again to any body, ſhe found a certain quiet of mind, which ſhe did not enjoy amid the

Court

Court and Town.

In the mean while the Cardinal, who was ſtill poſſeſs'd with the ſame Paſſion, being in no wiſe able to bear with her abſence, daily ſent his Phyſicians, thinking that as they were the moſt expert of all the Kingdom, they would contribute to her health, on which he reckon'd her return depended, more than on all thoſe that ſaw her. This was his firſt Motive; but he had another, that had ſtill a more peculiar regard to her Perſon. His Quality of firſt Miniſter, and Sovereign Diſpenſer of all the Graces of the Kingdom, rendering all People Complaiſant to his Wills, he encharg'd one of thoſe Phyſicians with a Letter for Madam *d'Elbœuf*, and this man building much greater hopes upon this piece of Service, than upon all the Advantages he might derive from his Profeſſion, fancy'd that with a little Addreſs, it

would be Easy for him to get her to peruse it. For that purpose he went from *Paris* before his Companions, and being arriv'd at that house; *Madam*, said he to the Dutchesse *D. Elbœuf*, *Our Calling is a strange sort of Bus'ness. Those that are best Skill'd in it are often esteem'd less able than Others. The Quality of a* Senior *among us is commonly his whole Merit. Since I had the honour to see you, I have a Specifique remedy to give; yet my Companions have not deem'd it good, because it Surpasses their Capacity; So as that I am now forc'd to come hither, as it were in stealth to discourse with you.* At these words he took a Paper out of his Pocket, wherein he had really set down a Prescription, and reading it to her as the best thing in the World: *Now this Madam*, added he, *is what your health consists in. In case you make use of it, I'le venture my head you recover in three days time. But*

be ſure you keep the ſecret till then, Otherwiſe it will ſet my Seniors *ſo againſt me, as will put us beyond all Reconciliation.*

He diſcourſt the Princeſs upon this pretended ſecret, till ſuch time as that he heard ſome Body coming in the Anti-Chamber. Then ſlily taking his opportunity he ſlipt another Paper into the Princeſſes hand, entreating her that ſhe would receive it and put it under her Pillow, untill that ſhe could read it in private; that he would go in the mean while for fear it might be his Companions, and ſo ſtealing down a little back pair of Stairs, he fancy'd his trick was going to have all the ſucceſs he could wiſh; and the rather, for that the Princeſs, who had never car'd to diſoblige any Body, had really put it where he had bid her.

The Noiſe they had heard in the Anti-Chamber had been Oc-

caſion'd

caſion'd by ſome Ladies, that were come from *Paris* on purpoſe to viſit the Princeſs, and as ſhe was not willing to make known the nature of her Malady, ſhe did not quit her Bed, as long as they ſtaid with her. However their viſit was ſomewhat long, nay, and they invited themſelves to Dinner; which made the Princeſs quite forget the Phyſicians Preſcription, which beſides ſhe thought to be of ſo little Conſequence, that had ſhe loſt it, it would in no wiſe have troubled her. After theſe Ladies had din'd they talk'd of returning, & as they were going out, *Mr. D' Elbœuf* arriv'd, who ſeeing his Wife ſtill in Bed, he was afraid ſhe grew worſe and worſe. And going to her to enquire of her her ſelf, as he was careſſing of her, he perceiv'd the Corner of a Paper that paſs'd from under the Pillow, and taking it without dreaming of any

thing;

thing; *What's this, Madam*, said he to her, and viewing it, he perceiv'd it to be the Cardinals hand. Madam *d' Elbœuf* being sincere, told him what she thought it to be, and being willing to read to her her self that pretended Prescription, she made up to take it out of his hands. But he beginning to enter into great Suspition, that still augmented, at this new Action of hers, step'd three paces back, and opening that Paper, he read these Words therein.

The Cardinals *Letter to* Madam *d' Elbœuf.*

I send you my Physicians, but I have little hopes of their curing you. If they understood any thing, they ought to begin to shew it in my Person, I believe you sick of the same Distemper I have for this long while lain under, and nevertheless they have not as yet been able to find out any Remedy for their Master. But how should they find any, since my Cure depends only

on

on You? Would to God I had brought you to a Condition to say as much of me, the zeal I should have to serve you, would be a Secret Reproach to you for the Contempt you have ever had for my Passion. The more I examine my self, the less do I find my self Worthy of this Treatment. So perfect a Love as mine never incurr'd so much Hatred; and indeed to tell you my thoughts plainly, I do not think my self the only Occasion of my misfortune. Though I am no Lovely Person, yet I have some Qualities that ought to Distinguish me. The least is that of Minister, and I reckon much more upon a Passion that admits of no Comparison. But either that I came too late to offer you my services, or that you naturally hate me, or as is more probable a more happy Person is come across, I may say, that while the Whole World looks up with Envy at my fortune, I am nevertheless the most unfortunate of all men

Mr. d' *Elbœuf* blush'd and then turn'd pale, while he was reading

this

this Letter, and his Wife knew not the meaning of the Different Motions that appear'd in his Countenance. At length when he had done, he ſat himſelf down in a Chair, falling back like a man that had not the Power to ſupport himſelf. This was ſtill matter of greater Amazement to this Princeſs; and indeed being no longer able to curb her Curioſity; *tell me for Gods ſake*, ſaid ſhe to him, *what there is Miſterious in that Paper, and you muſt ſure have found very Surprizing things in it, and very touching at the ſame time, for it to bring you in the Condition I ſee you: Is there in it that I muſt dye, ſpeak and let me know. It ought to be ſo, Madam*, the Duke anſwer'd her, *if I had more regard to the affront you put upon me, than to the affection I have ever had for you, yes, I ought now to think only of revenging my ſelf, but either that I have but little honour, or that there are reaſons of weakneſs that do detain*

me,

me, and which nevertheless I do not approve of; I see my Infamy as a man void of all sense. At these Words he flew out of the Chamber all in a rage, which Madam *D' Elbœuf* seeing, who was in an inconceivable pain to know the meaning of all this, she threw her self from off the Bed and begg'd of him to Stay. But this Prince who wanted only to get away from a place, where he had newly made so vexatious a Discovery, Stopping his Ears to her entreaties, lock'd the Door too after him, and by this means hindred her from following him, he immediately had his horses put into the Coach, and stepping in he went and Closetted himself up in *Elbœuf* Hall, ordering that if any one came to see him to say that he was in the Country. Madam *D' Elbœuf* having seen him go away in this manner, and having besides undergone the reproaches I mention'd, follow'd him

him within less than half an hour, tho' her condition was such as not to do it without hazarding her health. She went directly to his Chamber, & falling at his feet, *I take away my Life, Sir*, said she to him, *rather than continue to give you any longer the occasion of your Discontent. I have nothing upon my heart that upbraids me in the least, and if I was, as you tax me, perfidious, you could not carry your self otherwise. I advise ye, Madam*, the Duke made answer, *to Condemn me. What would ye have more of me, than to leave you at liberty to do all you Please? Return into the Country, if you'l take my Counsel, 'tis a place much fitter than this for your Gallantries, & all I require of you is to leave me at quiet.* He turn'd his back upon her at the same time, & opening a window that look'd out upon a Garden, he fell to gazing there, but so possess'd with his misfortune, that if he had been ask'd [illegible] look'd

mild

look'd at, he could in no wise have told. His Wife notwithstanding his obstinacy to conceal what he ail'd from her, went to him again, and as she still press'd him upon the same thing, he was so weary, that he told her how that unless she left him at quiet, he would throw himself out of the Windows. *But I'le forestall you*, Madam *D'Elbœuf* reparty'd, being in the utmost Despondency at this usage: *and indeed it would be much better for me that I tumbled my self down headlong, than any longer suffer what I have not incurr'd by any ill Conduct of mine.* At these words either that she really meant to throw her self out of the Windows, or that she would only make a shew to fright him, she did what was requisite to get up, at which the Duke being very much startled, he seiz'd on her Petticoats, then taking her about the Waste, he in spight of her strugling carry'd her

off from that place. This Princeſs whoſe Deſpair could not be greater than viewing him with eyes capable of inſtilling Compaſſion; *Why do you hinder me from dying*, ſaid ſhe to him, *when you kill me with a Death a thouſand times more Cruel than that I might inflict upon my ſelf? But know that all your efforts will be in vain, you will not be always with me, and unleſs you tell me wherein I am faulty, I ſhall ſooner or later find an opportunity to affranchize my ſelf from all your Cruelties.*

The Duke having a thouſand reaſons to keep his Secret, or at leaſt thought he had, not that he imagin'd he had any thing new to tell, but thought at leaſt that his Caſe required ſecrecy, that ſo he might detect things which as yet he was a ſtranger to, ſeeing himſelf nevertheleſs perplext by theſe menaces, endeavour'd to fence off this ſtroak, by taking another Courſe. Wherefore making a

ſhew

shew of yielding to her Persecutions; *I must then Satisfy you Madam*, said he to her, *since you oblige me thereunto; but as it is a thing I cannot do without great Reluctancy, and this I have naturally an Aversion for Reproaches, afford me this Night to consult my Pillow upon the matter. I promise you to unbosom my heart to you to morrow morning; but on Condition that what shall pass between us two shall not go farther.*

Madam *D' Etbœuf* thought it strange that he thus deferr'd acquainting her with a thing which she so ardently desir'd to know; however, thinking she had but one night to wait, she consented to the proposal. And the night being pass'd without her having so much as clos'd her eyes, she impatiently waited for the Dukes coming out of his Chamber, when they came to tell her that he had taken horse two hours before day. *Taken Horse*, she retorted in a dis-

mal amaze: *Ah! This is too much*, he added fainting, *and I must dye.* She said no more; but before the rest of the day was spent, a violent feavour seiz'd her, Whose Symptomes appear'd so dangerous to the Physicians, that they thought it requisite to send in search of Mr. *d' Elbœuf.*

He was gone to *Blandi* to see the Count *de Soissons*, Whom he reckon'd for one of his best Friends. He at first endeavour'd to conceal the Melancholly under which he labour'd, and made him believe that thinking the time tedious that he had not seen him of so long a while, he was come on purpose to invite him to return to Court. To back what he said, he made use of a world of Plausible reasons, by which he let him see that a Prince of his Birth far from making any advantage by keeping at a distance, hazzarded the losing of All. That at least he could

not deny but that this was the direct way to be abandon'd by all his friends; that he was not to learn that most men suffering themselves to be led on by Interest, would remain affected, so far only as that they saw a Person was of use to them for their fortune; that however Rich a Prince of the Blood might be, certain People were there that nothing could be procured for but by the Channel of the Court: That thus it was beyond all Question that those People having nothing more to hope, would fall off by degrees; that this was such a Truth that it was the Loadstone of the greater part; that it was commonly seen that the Court of the Ministers was much more numerous then that of the Princes themselves; & whence does this proceed, but from the reason newly urg'd; that as for his part, he was as little fond as Others of doing any thing Un-

worthy of his Birth, which nevertheless, necessity had several times oblig'd him to.

The Count *de Soissons* after having giv'n him the hearing, seeing that he pres'd him still on by reasons full as strong as these, and being desirous to conceal from him his inducements to retirement, told him he jump'd in accord with all he said but that, nevertheless things there were too difficult to be born withall, that there was no standing the Brunt of them. That no longer to hide his Discontent from him, he must needs tell him, that Cardinal *Richelieu* abus'd his fortune: that far from giving the Princes of the Blood that Consideration he was oblig'd to, he behav'd himself in such manner towards them, that if it had not as a man may say, been casting imputations upon the King to have corrected that Minister into his Duty, he should long since have giv'n way

to the Temptation. And thereupon taking him to Witneſs whether or no he ſpoke the Truth, this being as it were touching the Dukes Wound, who was much more envenom'd againſt his Eminency, he perceiv'd that he Changed Colour. And certain it is, that the Duke being no longer able to bear a Converſation of this kind; *Let's talk no more of him*, ſaid he to him, *my reaſons are weak in Compariſon of yours, and though I was of another mind at my Coming hither, Truth does now oblige me to ſide with your Opinion.* After this he would have diſcourſt of ſomething elſe, but us'd ſuch great violence upon himſelf in doing it, that the Count, whom it was not eaſy to put the Change upon, taking notice of it: *My Lord Duke*, ſaid he to him, *You have ſomething at heart, which you do not utter, and though I had been leſs Converſant with you than I have, yet could I not have miſs'd of obſer-*

ving it. *Why with your friends d'ye put this Constraint upon your self? And to whom would you unbosom your heart, if you are thus reserv'd to me, You that know, that I have no Secret that is so to you? tell me not so,* the Duke made answer, *and pray'e remember that before you left* Paris, *I press'd you to tell me the Occasion, but without being gratify'd? Your Secret, nevertheless, was of no great Importance, whereas that mine* ——

This word having started from him, without making Reflection on it, he would willingly have recall'd it, as soon as he perceiv'd it; *Finish,* said he to him *without hesitation, and since your Secret is incomparably of greater Consequence than mine, for that very reason ought you the rather to lay your self open. I did not indeed, acquaint you with the Cause of my retreat, since to what purpose was it, either to You or I? On the Contrary the making of you a Confident in that*

Case,

Case, was it not capable of injuring you? If the Cardinal had known that I had Consulted you, would you now, as you are, be upon the List of his friends, and would it not be the meane of making you lose a World of Courtesies, which you your self have own'd to me that you are indebted to him for? He has Sold 'em to me at a very Dear rate, the Duke retorted, *and it would have been much better for me, he had been my greatest Enemy*: In uttering these words he gave a great sigh, and the Court, who fancy'd that such motions only suited with amorous Passions, presently imagin'd that he had discover'd that which the Cardinal had for his Wife, he urg'd him so much the more to tell him what the matter was, as that he fear'd he had also discover'd that this Princess made returns. The Duke after having said so much, no longer knew how to decline proceeding further, tho' to speak the

truth, he was persuaded, that a Secret of that nature is never to be divulg'd. But the *Count*, whose Curiosity could not be greater, reproaching him that his being so reserv'd, was not acting like a freind, he induced him to ease his heart. Yet was he so very loath to make a step of this kind, that he was going to take a vast Circumlocution; when the Count judging by all he said, that certain Secrets were there that were to be pull'd out? *The truth is*, said he to him, *You raise my Pitty, and by the Perplexity I see you in, I know not whether I ought not to believe something of Madam* d' Elbœuf. *It is but too true*, the Duke reply'd, being seiz'd with so great an affliction, that there was not the like. *Perfidious as she is, she has suffer'd the Cardinal to talk of Love to her, and blinded as I was, I did not so much as take notice of it, but have still my self sent her to his house several times. Alas! I*

no longer wonder at the Easiness I met withall in dispatching my Bus'ness, I was then a stranger to the Cause; but I now but too plainly see into my misfortune. However tell me, my Prince, If being in my Place, you would have thought to have had any thing to apprehend on that side. Is He *such a Temptation for a Woman, & must not a* She *be very termagantly loose to entertain such a Spark.*

The *Count*, with Whom this Discourse was a kind of Prognostication that the Duke had detected things criminal to all Intents, found himself no less struck with jealousy than the Duke *d'Albœuf*. Nevertheless thinking he was under an obligation to keep it better conceal'd; *You are too hasty*, said he to him, *and whoever should rely upon what you say would be possest that your Honour was lost past all Remedy. Soft and fair, Good my Lord Duke, and you should not if I might advise you, proceed so far upon*

a bare Suspicion. How! a Suspicion The Duke made answer, *D'ye know upon what grounds I speak? No truely*, the *Count* reply'd, *and that is what I desire to know. It is upon Convincing proofs*, the *Duke* retorted, *and when you know it is from a Letter I my self found under her Pillow; What will you have to say?*

If the Duke had look'd upon the *Count* at that Moment, or rather if he had been in a Condition to observe the different motions with which he was animated, it is beyond all Question that he would have been still more unhappy than he was, since he must have perceiv'd that his Wife had two Lovers instead of One, and that this was the Rival his Eminency complain'd so much off in his Letter. But his misfortune depriving him of judgement, his thoughts were wholly taken up in justifying what he had newly said. Wherefore taking his Letter

ter out of his Pocket; *Here is what,* said he to him, *makes me speak in this manner, and which I confide in you, as a Person from whom I expect friendship, and of whom I require good Counsel.* At these Words he gave him that *Letter*, and the Count opening it with a Dread I shall not undertake to Express, was strangely surpriz'd and overjoy'd at the same time, that he did not by it find the State of things to be as the Duke had reported 'em. On the Contrary he saw himself pointed out therein, as the Party to whom that Princess had given her heart: an happiness he would much rather have heard utter'd from the Dutchess's own Mouth, than by that of a Rival. However as it wanted much of his being so wretched as he had imagin'd, this wrought another manifest alteration in his face, and by which the Duke might again have perceiv'd how much he was affected by all

that

that concern'd his Wife, if, as I have already ſaid, his misfortune had not depriv'd him of the uſe of *Reaſon*.

In the mean while the *Count* having made an end of reading this Letter, told the Duke how that he was in the wrong in thinking himſelf ſo unhappy, that if he made his ill fortune conſiſt in having a Wife that had Adorers, he had drawn it upon himſelf: that he muſt not then have choſen one of ſo much Beauty, and merit. That it's uſual to love ſuch Perſons. But what he ſhould vex at was, if it was true that his wife loy'd any Other than himſelf. That this did not appear by the Letter he had newly put into his hands, but on the Contrary, that ſhe hated the Cardinal. That it was only ſtuffd with Complaints and jealouſy, an indubitable mark that ſhe was virtuous. *Ah! my Dear Count*, the Duke reply'd,

reply'd, *do not seek as you do to blind me: God be thank'd, I am not naturally jealous; but withall I see Clear when there is occasion for so doing. The Lover that has most reason to applaud his fortune, does he not ever Complain? 'Tis the very way to bring a Woman to one's hand, and the Sex that ever makes a Lurry before it yields to our desires would it be willing to have its favours proclaim'd to it's self. It's much better to make it Cruel at the time it is least so, and after this manner is it that you ought to Explain what you see. Otherwise how should Madam* d' Elbœuf *have received this Letter? Does she not know that this is Contrary to her Duty? But what do I say, she not only receiv'd it, but likewise hid it under her Pillow, and which is worse she would have hindered me from taking it. If you would have me to discover my malady still further to you, would she have gone to his house if she had done what a Vertuous Woman ought to do? She knew*

knew well enough that he lov'd her, and that alone was sufficient to have hindred her from ever setting foot there. I must needs own that she sometimes declin'd going, telling me she should be very glad if I would exempt her from that trouble; but that is a dress as gross as the Other, and by which I was not to be trepann'd. She spoke in this manner to me, that in case I came to make a Discovery, she might tell me, and don't you know that you would needs put me upon it, and that I never went but against my will. *And yet the Perfidious Woman went, and after all I have now said to you, I beg of you to tell me sincerely what you would think were you in my place,*

While these things occurr'd at *Blandi*, the Court that had not been in any wise uneasy at the Count *de Soisson's* retirement, was not exempt from alarums, when they knew the Duke *de Elbeuf* was gone to him. The Cardinal

notwithstanding

notwithstanding the Passion of Love had another of no less Prevalency. I mean that he was gnaw'd by so great an Ambition, that all the rest was nothing in Comparison of that. Thus imagining that these two Princes plotted to drive him away from the Ministry, he went to the house of the Countess Dowager of *Soissons*, and told her that the King sent for her to answer to him for the Conduct of her Son. This Princess not having the Complaisance to study to please the favourites, made him answer, that her son was too wise ever to be wanting in the respect he ow'd to his Majesty; that she would engage Body for Body; but that she must needs tell him at the same time, that he had too much heart ever to buckle under a Minister that understood not himself. This answer vex'd the Cardinal, and tho' he was bound in her to respect

the

the Quality of Princeſs of the Bloud, he daſh'd out ſo far as to ſay, that ſhe it was, perhaps, that gave her ſon ill Counſell.

From thence he went to my Lady Dutcheſs of *Elbœuf*, where notwithſtanding that they told how that ſhe was indiſpos'd, and that it was impoſſible to ſee her, he mounted up into her Apartment. He there found the Phyſicians that had newly been paſſing their Judgements, as I have intimated, that ſhe was in great danger, and that it became 'em to acquaint *Mr. Elbœuf* with her Condition. But none of 'em knowing whither he was gone, he ran a riſque of knowing nothing of the matter, if the Cardinal had not heard of his being at *Blandi*. The State he ſaw the Dutcheſs in was the cauſe that inſtead of making her the ſame Complement as he had done to Madam *de Soiſſons*, he was touch't with all Compaſſion.

Wherefore

Wherefore drawing near her Bed, and all withdrawing out of Reſpect, he expreſs'd his Grief to her for the Condition he ſaw her reduc'd to. At the ſame time a Gentleman was diſpatcht away to go find out the Duke, and being arriv'd at *Blandi*, he acquainted him how that his Wife was near being dead than alive. He was concern'd at this News notwithſtanding this Prejudice; and after having enquired into the Circumſtances of her illneſs, and what hour it took her, he aſkt him by what means he came to know where he was. *By the Cardinal*, the Gentleman made him anſwer, *whom I left at my Lady's Bed-ſide, and who came to ſee her, knowing ſhe lay a dying.*

This was ſufficient to plunge this Prince into Deſpair, and after having bid this Gentleman go reſt himſelf for a while 'till ſuch time as he had his anſwer. *Well*

my Dear Prince, said he to the Count de Soissons, needs there any thing more to perswade you of the reality of my misfortune? She is not content with being a Perfidious and an Ingrate, she likewise forgets in her present extremity, that it is impossible but that he on shou'd must needs shew such Weaknesses as will make known my Disgrace. I say nothing of the little Care she has taken of her Salvation, and yet this is what pierces my very heart: I have still so much Love for her, notwithstanding the reason I have to hate her, as to desire that while she is going to make me lead a Long wishing Life, she should enjoy Eternal happiness, if it be the Will of God to take her out of this World. Imagine all I can say to my self, I allready bewail her, both as sick, and as threatned with dying very suddenly. In fine, what shall I say more, I must needs own to you that I no longer know my self, and you must needs be much surpriz'd after what I've declar-

ved

red to you, when I tell you that I am going this very instant to afford her all the assistance I possibly can? At these words he took leave of the *Count*, who entreated him not to harbour any such Phancies in his head, and that his wife was more virtuous then he imagin'd.

He had like to have kill'd his Horse, so over-impatient was he, and being coming to *Elbeuf* Hall he found her still worse then he had been told. And indeed, she had lost all sort of Knowledge, insomuch that making up to her, & seeing that she hardly breath'd: *How Madam*, said he to her, with a voice interrupted with sighs and sobs, *will you dye without me? Don't you know that our days are inseparable? Why must you have the Cruelty to leave me: And is this what you promis'd me?* But this was for all the world the same as if he had spoke to the Walls: She was not in a Condition to make him an an-

swer,

ſwer, nor even to underſtand him, which he ſtill more and more perceiving, he began to tear his hair: This created ſo much pitty in all the By-ſtanders, that they knew not which was moſt tobe pitty'd, he or her: ſhe to dye at an age, as a Man may ſay, when People begin to live; He to loſe a Wife, without whom they were very ſenſible Life would be a Burden to him.

Two or three days paſs'd in this manner without any hopes of her recovery, after which ſhe ſeem'd to be a little better. Madam *de Guiſe* her Relation and Friend, who had conſtantly been with her ſince her illneſs, told her then the Affliction her Husband was under, which had brought him to keep his Bed as well as her ſelf. *That's not poſſible*, the Ducheſs immediately anſwered: *Why ſay ye ſo*, Madam *de Guiſe* retorted, *and has* Monſieur d' Elbœuf

d' Elbœuf *carry'd himself so ill towards you, that you ought to be surpris'd at this Tenderness?* Madam *d' Elbœuf* saw plainly she had said too much; nevertheless the thing being done, and past all Remedy: *I have my reasons, Madam,* she reply'd, *to say what I do, and once again, is it possible that what you tell me is true?* Madam *d' Guise* without shrifting further than she was willing into her secret, having confirm'd the thing to her anew: *Ah Madam,* said Madam *d' Elbœuf* to her, *if you'l oblige me, let me hear this from* Monsieur d' Elbœuf's *own mouth, and if he cannot come hither, let him be told that I have still strength enough to go to him.*

These words being related to the Duke, he would by no means she should rise from her Bed, and overjoy'd that she was better, he went into her Chamber, guessing aright that if he went not to hers, she would come to his. After what

what had pass'd you may well think he was mightily at a loss where to begin the Conversation; and indeed he made his appearance with a down-cast look, not that he thought he was too blame, but because he reproach'd himself as guilty of a weakness in having any regard for a faithless woman. But Madam *d' Elbœuf* having nothing to upbraid her self withall. *Well sir*, said she to him, *you see me here ready to dye, and what comforts me is, that if I do not dye for you, I dye at least for the love of you, I was not able to suffer your suspicions without sinking under the Reflexion, and to my highest happiness I may now discourse you upon my Innocency. You would by no means give me Credit, when I would have entertain'd you upon that point at another Occasion: God knows however that I did not intend to impose upon you, no more than I do now; I never wronged you in any manner, and if I have had but*

so

so much as any such thought, I beseech him never to pardon me. One day will come that you will know my Innocence, and that you will have a regret for having unjustly suspected me. 'Tis the Consolation I carry along with me now I am dying, nay, and I tell you that I dye the most satisfy'd Person in the World.

Ah! Madam, said the Duke to her, his heart being pierc'd with so touching a discourse, *I owe rather to see my Repentance. I may have been jealous without wounding your honour, and beauteous as you are, might not I apprehend some or other should undertake to supplant me! There needs no more then seeing you to cause such a Design to be entertain'd, your discretion is not capable of quelling it; and if notwithstanding the little likelyhood there is of obtaining such ends upon so Vertuous a Person, there are nevertheless such People as will keep their Intentions alive upon the least glimmering of*

hopes,

hopes, why will you not give me leave to tremble when I see them harbour any such thoughts? You will doubtless tell me that I have no reason to tremble; But I must answer you at the same time that their hopes being as ill grounded as my fear, it is pardonable in me that I take the Allarum, seeing that they contrive to robb me of my only Blessing. This is all I can say in my Justification, to which I add an extreme Repentance, and a sincere Confession of my fault.

Madam *d' Elbœuf* being over-joy'd to see him harbour such sentiments: *And I for my part pardon you*, said she to him, *because I love you; and I believe you to be only jealous because you love me. Whether God disposes of me, or restores me to my health, you shall never hear a word of it from me. I believe you to do the Like, since if I should see you relapse into the same fault, you could never obtain my pardon.* Mr. *d' Elbœuf* vow'd he would never speak

to

to her upon any ſuch account, and after having Careſs'd her to a high degree, which was ſtill more perſuaſive to this Lady than his words, he withdrew into his own Chamber, where about an hour after he was ſeiz'd with a terrible Feaver. This was kept as a ſecret from Madam *d'Elbœuf*, for fear of making her worſe, and as it was impoſſible but that ſhe muſt enquire after him, Madam *de Guiſe* continuing ſtill to be about her, thought convenient to make her believe, that the King was gone to *Fontainebleau*, and that he had taken him along with him. *How, without ſaying any thing to me*, Madam *d'Elbœuf* retorted, *and this is quickly giving the lye to his laſt Converſation* ! Nevertheleſs, that ſhe might not find ſo much fault with his abſence, Madam *de Guiſe* gave a Gentleman order to come once in two days, as if ſent by the Duke to enquire after her

health. This Trick ſped for the firſt time; but the Dutcheſs having taken it ill that he had not writ to her, the Gentleman was forc'd to contrive another Sham, upon the account of his not bringing any Letter as yet. The ſame pretence was us'd in four or five ſeveral Viſits he paid her: One while the King had ſent for him to play at Tennis, when he had juſt his Pen in his hand: another while, that he had ſent for him to go a Stagg-hunting, or to engage him in ſome other buſineſs, and ſtill that great name interpos'd it's Aſſiſtance, as the only Cloak they had to Cover the Reality. But the Dutcheſs at the long run, after having once or twice been thus deluded, ſuſpecting ſhe was impos'd upon, deſign'd to repair herſelf to *Fontainbleau*, whither her ſtrength that was very much re-ſtor'd, ſince the Converſation ſhe had had with her Husband, made

her

her believe she might go without prejudicing her health.

Many resolutions are there that are not attended with performance, but the Dutchess had no sooner fram'd hers, but that she would have taken Coach, notwithstanding all they could say to her to divert her from it. Thus were they oblig'd to own her Husbands Condition to her, and tho' her knowing him in danger afflicted her extremly, she nevertheless receiv'd some comfort for the reason I am going to alledge. She had attributed his absence and silence to his slights for her; Now there being no room for any such thought since she knew the occasion, she bent her mind wholly upon giving him assistance. She went directly to his Apartment, & finding him in a much more dangerous Condition then they had inform'd her he was, she gush'd out into tears. Not satisfy'd with

giving him these Instances of affection, she would suffer no Body besides her self to give him what was requisite. Mr. *d' Elbœuf* not being able to endure to see her take so much pains, conjur'd her to leave those offices to the People that were about him; but as if she had been afraid that the Remedys would lose their virtue in their hands, she would by no means obey him.

In the mean while the Duke's illness proceeded to such an Extremity, that the Physicians desired his Confessor to bid him think of his Conscience. He receiv'd this news without appearing to be in any wise concern'd, and after having dispos'd himself for death, he bid Madam *d' Elbœuf*, whom he saw all in Tears, to draw near him, and that he had something to say to her. She caus'd the Attendants to withdraw into another Room, and sitting upon his

Bed

Bed-side: *Ceaſe bewailing Madam*, ſaid he to her, *a Perſon that thinks himſelf a thouſand times more happy in dying than if God reſtor'd him his health. It is now time or never to own to you, that I can no longer love you; So that tho' you may have heard me tell you the contrary in your illneſs, attribute it to a Remnant of Compaſſion and not to a real Love. Since you have rendered your ſelf unworthy of me, I am afraid ſo much as to look upon you: I ſhall not tell you that you have abſolutely diveſted me of honour, nothing of that has fallen within my knowledge, and it is not in my power to Convict you of it; but know that a Civil woman ought to be as exempt from ſuſpicion as from Crime. But what's this I ſay? It is not upon a bare ſuſpicion I accuſe you; it is upon a Letter I my ſelf found under your Pillow. What is more, you have receiv'd at your Houſe the Perſon that writ it to you, and that in the very time, that I had newly ſpecify'd, both*

by my Reproches and my Conduct, that there was a great deal to be blamed in your Carriage. He has been seen at your Beds feet, expressing to you his Concern at your illness, and you had not so much as the Precaution to forbid the man to mention it to me, that had order to acquaint me with your sickness.

Madam *d'Elbœuf* who from the beginning of this Discourse had been surpriz'd to a degree as is more easy to be imagin'd then represented by the Pen, would needs several times have interrupted him; but he had entreated her to let him make an end, without her interfering, promising after that to hear her as long as she pleased. Thus having not as yet absolutely unburthen'd his heart: *Is this, Madam,* continued he, *what I was to expect from a Woman whom I tenderly lov'd before I marry'd her, whom I have passionately lov'd since that time, and whom I should*

all

all my Life have lov'd more than my self, if she had not giv'n me reason to hate her. Nevertheless since God calls me out of this world, and I would have me forgive as he has forgiv'n us, draw near me, and embrace me, I beseech him to give you the Grace to know your self, and that calling me to mind, you tell your self sometimes that I merited another guess usage.

Madam *d'Elbœuf* was seiz'd with so violent a grief, hearing him talk in this manner, that it was a wonder she had the power to make him any answer. Nevertheless it being her Interest not to let him depart this Life without justifying her self; *It's with an unparalell'd amazement, Sir,* said she to him, *that I hear all these Reproaches, and if I might have interrupted you, I should long since have done it, to have required of you the sight of a Letter so fatal to your repose and mine. For if I know what it is, I wish God may punish me immediatly,*

and the Paper you took from under my Pillow was only a Preſcription of a certain Phyſician, who pretended to cure me without the others knowledge. He is ſtill living to tell the truth of the matter, and if you found a Letter inſtead of that Preſcription, the Devil muſt needs have a hand in the buſineſs. This is a wretched Evaſion, Madam, the Duke reply'd, *for a Woman of Wit, and tell me ſeriouſly if I ought to feed my ſelf with this* Chimæra. *Hold,* added he, giving her the Letter, *here's the thing in Debate: This is not the Devil you talk of, that writ it, but the Cardinal himſelf. You pretend now to be ſurpriz'd; But what can you now ſay to this? Muſt a Princeſs of your Rank diſhonour her ſelf by ſo ſcandalous an Amour; For after all if you take away from the Cardinal the luſtre that proceeds from his favour, what would all the reſt be? Am not I, without vanity, as much to be valued as he? And were it only that this has reduc'd me*

to

to my preſent Condition, have you no regret for having quitted me for him?

Madam *d' Elbœuf* was ſo amaz'd at this Letter, that ſhe knew not what anſwer to make. However having open'd her mouth in order to her Juſtification. *Ah! I very much ſuſpected*, ſaid the Duke to her, *that the Courſe you would take would be to deny all; But as I am not ſo very ſilly as to give Credit to your words, gratify me ſo far as to let me dye in quiet.* At theſe words he turn'd himſelf to the other ſide, and either that he fell into a ſwoon, or that the Paſſion with which he had ſpoke was injurious to him in that Condition, he was taken with a Convulſion fit, which oblig'd Madam *d' Elbœuf* to call in People to his Aſſiſtance. As the loſs wherewith ſhe was threatned, was ſo great as that ſhe might well be allarum'd, they took no notice of her ſorrow, which was imputed to quite ano-

ther source, then what was the real one. *Mr. D' Elbœuf* was very ill, and when his fit was over, the Physicians gave order that he should be left at Rest; and told Madam *d' Elbœuf* that she must forbear seeing him, unless she had a mind to hasten his Death. She could not but look upon this order as very Cruel, but tho' she could not enjoy any repose, untill that she had justify'd her self, nevertheless as nothing was dear to her in comparison of his Life, she abstain'd from going to see him.

Thus the Duke after having had one foot in his Grave, return'd thence as it were by miracle, and having still the present misfortune before his eyes, he was very glad they had sav'd him the trouble of seeing a Person, whom he could not look upon without Resentment. And that she might not come to disturb his quiet, now that he was better, he desired the

Phyſicians that they would continue the ſame Prohibitions to her, uſing as a pretence that the ſight of her too tenderly affected him, nay, and was capable of making him relapſe. The Phyſicians without ſhrifting into the ſecret, did what he bid them, and Madam *d'Elbœuf* thinking him to be ſtill in the ſame Condition, did with Patience attend upon the Recovery of his health. But he without giving her time to ſee him, no ſooner ſaw himſelf fit to take the air but that he return'd to *Blandi*, where the Count *de Soiſſons* had ſtill continued his abode.

This Count after the Duke *d'Elbœuf's* departure which I already intimated, had labour'd under an extraordinary Temptation of returning to *Paris*, whither he was ſummon'd by the Dutcheſſes ſickneſs: Nothing hindred him from ſo doing ſave the fear of diſpleaſing her, eſpecially conſi-

dering

dering how matters then ſtood, between her and her Husband. Nevertheleſs to free himſelf out of pain, he dayly ſent two Couriers to enquire after her health, & was not at reſt, till he knew her to be out of danger; he did the like when the Duke was ill, and ſince Madam *d' Elbœuf* could not be ignorant of this, ſince ſhe her ſelf had ſeen the Couriers that came to her Husband, ſhe ſometimes told her ſelf, notwithſtanding the ſorrow it became her to be under, that theſe Devoirs ſhould rather have been due to Love then to friendſhip; which ſhe would not however have ſaid had ſhe known that he had done the ſame for her as for him. However theſe ſorts of Phancies had but one moment between Life and Death, I mean that ſhe immediately rejected them, as things unworthy of a Princeſs, and employing her thoughts wholly in recovering her

her Husbands Affection. For this purpose she would have gone to have found him out, as I may say, to the very end of the World, if he had not been in a house dangerous for her. The Count, notwithstanding her Resolutions, and her Duty, came dayly into her mind, with all his Merit, & she was under apprehensions that if she came nearer him, it would be still worse. Yet perchance she would have pass'd over this Consideration in hopes her virtue would have brought her off, if she had not had another reason to Combat. She knew what had pass'd between the Count and Her, and she represented to her self that she could to go with a premeditated design not a Place where he was, without giving him the occasion of believing that he was the Principal occasion of her coming. Little did it avail her representing to her self in Contradiction to this Opinion,

that

that the presence of her Husband authorized that step, this reflexion vanish'd within a Moment after, by the Consequences which she drew that were absolutely opposite to it.

In this Perplexity, she chose what she thought most conformable to her Duty, and as this was not to stir from *Paris*, it happened that *Mr. d' Elbœuf*, whose jelousy made every thing a shadow, imagin'd that her staying in Town was occasion'd by the love she had for the Cardinal. This was new matter of sorrow for him, and the Count *de Soissons* seeing his grief daily augment, and knowing the reason of it, he partak'd therein, not as a Friend, but as a Party concern'd. He fancy'd that this sadness could only proceed from some new Discovery he had made, and this Opinion taking every moment deeper root than other, at the long run his trouble was no

less

leſs than that of Mr. *d'Elbœuf*. He made the ſame reflexions this Prince had done, and after having weigh'd in his mind all there was *pro & con*, as Jelouſy hinder'd him from doing the Dutcheſs Juſtice, he derived the ſame Conſequences from thence. Mr. *D' Elbœuf* could have clear'd that matter to him ſufficiently, but ſince his return he ſhunn'd all Converſations that had any relation that way; Inſomuch that the Count fearing to violate the Laws of Hoſpitality, was oblig'd to ſhew himſelf leſs curious.

At laſt *Monſieur d' Elbœuf* being no longer able to endure himſelf, and fearing that if he ſtay'd any longer there, he might happen upon ſome occaſion or other to make the Count further acquainted with his Misfortune, which he had been vex'd ſeveral times ſince he had imparted it to him, took leave of him, and retired to

Joinville upon the Frontiers of *Lorraine*, being a Lordſhip belonging to the Duke *de Guiſe*. As ſoon as Madam *d' Elbœuf* knew what Road he had taken, ſhe deſign'd to follow him, and having accordingly ſpoke her mind to Madam de *Guiſe*, this Princeſs would needs conduct her a ſmall days Journey from *Paris*, that is to ſay, as far as *Villemareuil*, a Houſe of the Duke of *Elbœufs*, where the Dutcheſs his Wife fell ſick, inſomuch that ſhe was forc'd to ſtop there againſt her will.

The Cardinal who was ever extreamly in love with her, tho' as often as he had dar'd to ſpeak to her upon that matter, he had met with ſuch uſage as ſhould have been capable of curing him of his Paſſion, no ſooner knew of this her departure, but that it allarum'd him. All Unfortunate as he was, he had ſtill the pleaſure of ſeeing her ſometimes at Court, and

and not being able to renounce that ſatisfaction, he reſolv'd to hinder her further Progreſs. Knowing that her illneſs detain'd her at *Villemareuil*, he prevail'd with the King to go to *Monceaux*, a Pallace Royal in thoſe parts, and under Colour of being Godfather to a Child half way from *Villemareuil*, he continued his way by that Houſe, going ſo ſlowly as that being overtaken by the Night about half a League thence, he ſent to Madam *d' Elbœuf* to entreat her that ſhe would afford him a Bed. This Princeſs found great matter of vexation in being thus oblig'd to receive his Eminency, and ſhe told Madam *d' Guiſe* that it was a ſtrange thing that he had not the Diſcretion to ſee that he would incommode her in her Preſent Condition.

Nevertheleſs he came, and as this Princeſs was not willing to let Madam *de Guiſe* perceive, that

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ſhe had ſecret reaſons that induc'd her to ſpeak in that manner, ſhe prevail'd upon her ſelf to make him a gracious Reception; that is to ſay, ſhe receiv'd him, as ſhe was oblig'd to receive the firſt Miniſter of the Crown. As for Madam *de Guiſe* having almoſt continually Occaſion for him, ſhe careſs'd him to a high Degree, nay and her Complaiſance proceeded ſo far, that ſeeing Madam *d' Elbeuf's* Indiſpoſition hinder'd her from taking Care her ſelf to have him well treated, ſhe took it upon her. On this account ſhe entreated him to Excuſe her, if for certain reaſons ſhe was oblig'd to intermit his Company.

The Cardinal, to whom ſhe could not do a greater kindneſs, having made her anſwer that ſhe was Miſtreſs, and that he came not to incomode her, turned then towards Madam *de' Elbeuf*, whom he began to make ſome tender reproaches

proaches, for having so left *Paris*, without considering how much it would afflict him. But she, whom such like Discourses did in no wise please, entreated him that he would abstain from them. *I shall so, Madam* said he to her, *since you will have it so; but I guess from whence so unjust a Command proceeds. If I was the Count* de Soissons, *you'd have more Complaisance for me: and besides I very well know that it is for the love of him you quit the Court. Several are so Silly as to believe that Monsieur* d'Elbœuf *has some share therein, I also know that you endeavour to keep them in that Opinion; But take notice that though you can easily impose upon them what you please, it is not so with me. It might be so, if I had only the assistance of natural Lights: But with those of Love, I dare tell you that you are mistaken, if you ever think to put the Change upon me. I know the Result of all that pass'd at* Blandi. *The Count*

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seeing he should ever find in me, not a Rival dangerous by my merit, but by my Love, has prevail'd with M. de Elbœuf *& you, to go to* Joinville, *that so he may suddenly follow you thither. He fancy'd, that when he was once there, he should easily impose upon a Credulous Husband: but let him know that a Rival has more piercing eyes, and that I shall take care to prevent his effecting his Designs.*

Madam *de Elbœuf* had much a-do to endure such like Discourses without interupting him; nevertheless having us'd so much violence upon her self as to hear him out, he had no sooner done his Extravagant way of talking, but that she told him that by his manner of speech, he must needs Phancy that he had over her Heart the same Empire he had over all *France*; that he must also needs think that the Quality of Minister, or the Purple, gave him a right to be wanting in Respect towards

towards Perſons of her Rank; But that to put an end to all at once, ſhe was glad to tell him to his face, that it was not to him ſhe was oblig'd to give an account, whether it was the Count *de Soiſſons* ſhe lov'd or her Husband; that nevertheleſs ſhe was willing to tell him, that on whatever ſide her heart turn'd, it would never be on his: That this being ſo it was to no purpoſe for him to continue his Importunities, that they had for a long while been troubleſome to her, and that the longer he therein perſever'd, the more inſupportable he would be to her.

This anſwer that was capable of curing the moſt paſſionate man, could not however extinguiſh the love of this Miniſter. True it is indeed, that in that very moment, he was ſo full of ſpight and vexation, that he thought he hated her as much as ever he lov'd her.

Thus

Thus looking on her with a furious eye; *I plainly perceive, Madam, said he to her, that I suffer'd my self to be dazzell'd with a certain false glisteri g. After all, your Merit is not greater than that of other People, and all well consider'd, the Difference there is only consists in my Opinion. Now that I am undeceiv'd, what can I say more to you, but that you are of the humour of all Women, Who despise what is Solid, and run after trifles. We shall see what the Count* de Soissons *will be capable of for your service, and within a little while neither You nor your Husband shall find me, when you shall have Occasion for me.*

These were the Cardinals first motions, and having utter'd some further menaces, he went out telling her that she might pursue her jorney when she pleas'd, and that henceforward her Conduct should be indifferent to him. Nevertheless as it is usual that a Lovers an-

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ger is but of ſhort Continuance, it came to paſs that he was no ſooner out of her Chamber, but his paſſion recover'd the ſame vigour it had, before. He as it were inſtantly forgot all ſhe had ſaid to him, and this did not better appear, than in his returning to her Chamber, as ſoon as he had ſupp'd. By ill luck for him, Madam *de Guiſe* kept her Company, and that Princeſſes preſence, who after having taken care, as I have ſaid, of entertaining him magnificently, had nothing more to hinder her from ſatisfying the Rights of Decency, having hinder'd him from ſaying what he had in his mind, he reſerv'd himſelf for the next day, in hopes that he ſhould perhaps meet with the Occaſion of diſcourſing Madam *de Elbeuf* in private. But the ſame Obſtacle ſtill interpos'd, inſomuch that he was oblig'd to take his leave of her after an indifferent manner.

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As his mind was wholly taken up with his Paſſion, he had no other thoughts on the way, than how to hinder her from going to *Joinoille*. This not being to be effected, without interpoſing the Kings Authority, he was no ſooner arriv'd at *Monceaux*, but that he inſinuated into his Majeſty, that ſince the Duke *d' Elbœuf*'s Retreat could have no other Tendency then to involve the State in troubles, he muſt of all neceſſity hinder the Dutcheſs from following him, that ſo ſhe might ſerve for an Hoſtage of his fidelity, that the two Journies that Prince had taken to *Blandi*, denoted an underhand deſign, which it was neceſſary to prevent; that in a word in ſo doing conſiſted the ſafety of his Royal Perſon, and the Publique Tranquillity. Thus did the Cardinal ſlily cover the Motive that ſet him to work. The King immediately diſpatcht away a Privy

Signet directing that Princeſs to ſtay at *Villemareuil* till farther orders, and the Perſon that was commanded to Carry it being informed that ſhe was already departed, ſpurr'd on after her, and oblig'd her to return.

During all theſe Intrigues the Duke her Husband was at *Joinville* ſtill poſſeſs'd with the ſame anxieties; and as if Deſtiny had Delighted in giving him new troubles, it happen'd that one of his Gentlemen, who was of the neighbourhood of *Villemareuil*, & with his leave had been ſome time at his own houſe, came to him four or five days after what had newly occurr'd. The Duke without dreaming of any thing, ask'd if he had no news to tell him, he who came from a place ſo near the Court; and this Gentleman thinking he could tell him nothing more poſitive than what has been newly recounted, acquainted him

how the Cardinal had lain at *Villemareuil*, where were the Ladys Dutcheſſes of *Guiſe* and *Elbœuf*: that Madam *De' Elbœuf* going thence the next day to come to him, a Courier had been ſent after her with a Privy-Signet to command her ſtaying there till further order.

This was ſufficient for the Duke *d' Elbœuf* who had nothing but his jealouſy in his head, to make him believe that his Wife endeavouring to excuſe her ſelf toward him, had her ſelf procured that order. *If it was not ſo*, ſaid he to himſelf, *Why was the Cardinal with her the Night afore. This is the reſult of their private Converſation, and the better to Cloak their Contrivance, ſhe muſt write this order on the Road, that ſhe forſooth, might not be ſuſpected to be in any wiſe concern'd in't.* Furthermore he muz'd upon his adventure, the more did he extend his thought, that is to ſay, he

studied to render himself still more unhappy. In the mean while after having spent eight days in all the anguish that jealousie can create, he grew in danger of sinking under it, when a Desire of revenge came in to his relief: A thought of that Nature is a kind of Consolation to a wretched Person, the Duke finding himself in some manner Solac'd by it, did absolutely resign himself up to it. He knew the Cardinal, according to the misfortune of all Favourits, had almost as many Enemies as there were Persons in the Kingdom; Thus his first thought was to make himself the head of a Party against him, and he did not doubt of being Seconded by Persons of great consideration. He fix'd his eyes principally upon M. *de Bourbon*, who had several reasons to complain of his Eminency, considering that not only he was a Personage that had many

friends, but who could also afford him a retreat at *Sedan*, a Considerable Place of it self, but still more by it's scituation, which being upon the frontiers of *Germany* and *Lorrain*, it follow'd that whoever was Master of it, might maintain a Close Correspondence with those two States. One thing alone perplex'd him in this Enterprize, namely he very much doubted whether the Duke of *Bouillon* would depend on him, not that his Birth was equall to his; but because that fortune having made his Circumstances such, as that he might equall himself to many Princes, he might prevail of the Advantages she gave him.

This thought having put him to some pause, as he still perceiv'd himself more and more inflam'd with the desire of Revenge, he endeavoured to surmount this Difficulty, which he saw no other ways of doing, but by giving that

that Duke and himself a Head, whose Birth might be above them both. The Count *de Soissons* seem'd to him altogether fit for this Design, his Quality of Prince of the Blood took away all sort of jealousy; Thus Bending his thoughts wholly upon engaging them Both, he sent Secretly to them to animate them against the Cardinal. But before I proceed to the result of these Intrigues, I should think it convenient to relate the posture of affairs at *Monceaux*, *Blandi*; and *Villemarenil*.

As concerning *Monceaux*, the Cardinal notwithstanding he was the Guardian of the Sovereign Authority, plainly perceiving that it did not extend over Peoples very hearts, did the more resent the Dutchesses Cruelty, that notwithstanding all the ill usage he met with from her, it was impossible for him to wrest her from his mind. She pierc'd into his very

ry Cabinet, where amidst Affairs of greatest Consequence, she came to tell him that the Place he possess'd might indeed Satisfy an Ambitious Spirit, but that when it was possess'd with Love and ill us'd by his Mistress, one might indeed pass for a happy Person in the minds of all Mankind, but that far from being effectually so, one might affirm him to be very unhappy. And in truth the Cardinal did so little value his fortune, that when he was alone he did nought else, then lament his Condition. When he was even in the exercise of his Charge, he was so possess'd with his Passion, that he was often so plung'd in thought, as occasion'd some to say that his great Wit degenerated into Folly. Those that spoke modestly of him, contented themselves with saying that his *Vertigo's* seiz'd him oftner than was usual. And what made way to this

Opinion,

Opinion, is that he began to be fond of Solitaryneſs; whence it was inferr'd that he was willing to conceal his Infirmites. But they never appear'd more, tho' to ſpeak the truth, they were not the ſame he was ſuſpected of, than one day that the *Sweediſh* Ambaſſadour had caus'd Audience to be demanded of him. He came from the Park of *Monceaux*, and as he had there only entertain'd himſelf with his Paſſion, his mind was ſtill ſo full of it, when the Ambaſſadour came, that in the midſt of the Diſcourſe, he chanc'd to ſay *Have not I done well in ſtopping the journey; But if gone, where ſhould I now be?* This Diſcourſe ſurpriz'd the Ambaſſadour, who knew not what to adapt it to, and having entreated him to tell him what it ſignify'd, as the Cardinal had perceiv'd his own Start, and had a preſence of mind: *This is not ſo much beſides the purpoſe as you*

imagine, he replied to him. *I mean that there was a Carriage of Money just ready for your Master, and it was just a going but for a Secret hint I had of it's being necessary to renew his Allyance before it was sent him. Now you interpose so much Difficulty in this Case that I am glad the money is still here. At least it shall not escape us, if your Master escapes us, and I care not tho' you know it, since I said it so loud.*

Now you must know that the Ambassadour did really cause Obstacles to intervene in the renewing the Allyance that was between the two Crowns, not so much however out of the Desire his Master had of breaking with the King, as to oblige him to pay him more punctually the Subsidies he had promis'd him by the former Treaty. Thus hearing talk of money, which was the main hinge of the Affair, it was quickly concluded to Both sides Content. Nevertheless

vertheleſs as the Cardinal was happy in all things, ſave in Love. The Ambaſſadour was ſo far from Imputing as an Ablence of mind the Diſcourſe he had begun with ſo little reaſon, he fancy'd he had only done it out of Policy, and to ſhew that his Maſter did not want money.

This is what paſs'd at *Monceaux*: as concerning *Villemareuil*, the Dutcheſs was there under an inconceivable uneaſineſs, ſuſpecting what was true, that is to ſay, that her Husband would be capable of believing, that the Privy Signet by which ſhe was ſtopt, had been Expedited with her Connivance. This thought, as may be gueſs'd, was but too ſufficient to rob her of her Quiet; Nevertheleſs ſhe would have had wherewithall to comfort her ſelf in the teſtimony of her own Conſcience, if unluckily for her the Count *de Sioſſons* had not likewiſe

come to disturb her in her Solitude. The Image of this Prince return'd every moment before her eyes, one while as having given her several expressions of Affection, another as an inconstant, who after having contented himself with having violated her heart, had us'd no further endeavours to perswade her that he had ever the same sensibility for her. This thought pleas'd her much more than the other, because she found it to be the means of driving away an Idea, which though it had not as yet caus'd her to make any step that shock'd her virtue, did nevertheless appear to her altogether Criminal. It was not sufficient for her to be exempt from Crimes in the eyes of all the world, she would likewise that her Conscience should not have any reproach to make her. Possess'd with these sentiments she was as far as *Blois* to find him

out, where she ask't him whether it was possible he could have remain'd silent so long, if it had been true that he had been struck with the Passion, which he had had the Boldness to discourse her upon.

But in the very time she thus did her Duty, she had reason to know, that the will to be Virtuous is not always sufficient. She her self made answer for this Prince, and told her self that he who had been capable of refusing such advantages as he had done for the Love of her, was not capable of forgeting her. She represented to her self further, that she had entreated him not to speak to her of his passion, after which he went to confine himself in solitaryness, a certain testimony that he knew it would be impossible for him to obey her, at least without shunning the sight of her.

It is easy to imagine the Effect which these sorts of thoughts produc'd

duc'd, they insensibly reduc'd her from the Love of her Duty to the Love of the Prince; and this without her reflecting on it in the least: so true it is that when we have a Propensity to any thing we go a great way in a little time. Nevertheless what hindred her Passion from making still a greater Progress, is that she conceiv'd that it became not a Lover to have so much Obedience. *I did indeed forbid him*, said she to her self, *the continuing to speak to me of Love; But did I forbid him the seeing me? It had been Sufficient in him to have obey'd me for two or three days, nay, and he ought highly to have valu'd that piece of Constraint to me; but thus to remain for near three Months without my hearing any News of him, is what I do not apprehend, and which he will also find a hard matter to justify to me.*

One day that she had spent two hours in such sort of Reflexions, she

ſhe ferreted her Cabinet, where ſhe had for a long time kept ſeverall Letters her Husband had formerly writ to her; but of ſo Paſſionate a Style, that whoever had read them, would have thought they had been from another than a Lover. She open'd one of them, and that affecting her, ſhe put 'em all into her Pocket; fancying that the peruſing of them would be capable of bringing her back to her Duty. She likewiſe perceiv'd the Duke's Picture, and after having view'd and withall beſought that Reſemblance to pardon in her the Love ſhe had for another, ſhe put it up with the Letters. Thence ſhe went into a Wood near her Houſe, where after having entertain'd her ſelf ſtill upon the ſame Subject, during a good ſpace of time, ſhe went into an Arbour, which the Duke had caus'd to be made on purpoſe to eat in, when he ſhould have a

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Such were the Lady Dutchess of *Elbeuf's* Reflections, when she saw her self in an Imminent danger

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go to *Villemarenil*; but the Count told him that after having united his fortune to his, as he had newly done, he would not suffer that he ſhould expoſe himſelf all alone in a place ſo near his enemy: that he would keep him Company, and that he ſhould at leaſt judge by theſe beginnings, with how much heat he would embrace his Intereſts.

He thus ſlily covered under the pretext of friendſhip, the deſire he had to ſee the Dutcheſs, to whom beſides he reſolv'd to give notice to be upon her guard as to her Conduct, that ſo if ſhe had really ſome underhand Correſpondence with the Cardinal, ſhe might be wary in her Carriage. Few Jealous Lovers are ſo obliging, and it's well known that this Paſſion commonly breaths Murder and Revenge. But this difference is to be made, that a man uſually deſires no more than his Rival's

Death;

Death; but as for that of the Miſtreſs, the Cruelty does not proceed ſo far, as to wiſh to ſee her buried under the ſame Ruines. At leaſt there is more of this Sentiment, than of the other, & what's moſt certain is that the Count was of the ſame here aſſerted.

Thus ſtill inſiſting to accompany the Duke, notwithſtanding that this latter would have declin'd it out of Reaſons of Decency, and perchance alſo becauſe he ſhould have been vex'd, ſhould he come to diſcover any thing, at length he gain'd his point. Then they both took Horſe, & alighted by night in the Burrough of *Villemareuil*, at a mans houſe that kept an Inn, and who had been formerly the Duke *d'Elbeuf's* Footman. This Duke forbid him to tell any body of their coming, & having ſpent the reſt of the night there, they went out the next morning by a back door, which

was

was not far from the Wood, where the Dutcheſs commonly walk'd.

This happen'd to be the very day ſhe was there, and they enter'd that Grove thro' a Breach that was in the Wall. They went about Twenty five or thirty paces together, ſpeaking ſoftly to one another, nay and hiding themſelves behind the Trees for fear any one ſhould perceive 'em. But when they came pretty near the Arbour, the Duke went before, beckoning the Count to follow him. The Duke being come thither without making any noiſe, lookt thro' the leaves, and perceiv'd his Wife, who had diſplay'd, as I have ſaid, all her Merchandize. The Picture was on one ſide, the Letters on another, and ſhe held one in her hand which ſhe was reading. I leave it to be gueſs'd what he fancy'd at this ſight; he imagin'd it

to

to be the Cardinals Letters and Picture, and I wonder he broke not in upon her, as he did within a moment after, to have run his Sword through her body. But having been ſtopt by his Good Angel, he ſtill continued looking, as if he could have ſeen more. Madam *d'Elbœuf* after having done reading that Letter, which was extremely tender, it ſo very much affected her, that the tears guſhing from her eyes, ſhe took out her handkerchief to wipe 'em. This was again a freſh ſignal ſufficiently provoking to make the Duke launch in upon her, but he refrain'd ſo doing; But for reaſons I can't imagine, and the leſs, ſince to ſpeak the truth, methinks if I had been in his place, I ſhould not have had ſo much Patience.

In the mean while the Count advanced ſoftly, tho' the Poſture he ſaw him in, muſt needs have given him occaſion to believe that he

he view'd something that challenged Attention. Step by step however he came up to him, and it was just in the time that the Duke being no longer able to contain himself, thought convenient to burst in. Now you must know that the Dutchess after having wip'd her eyes, had taken up the Picture I mention'd, and having view'd it, as it were to make it reparation for the Sentiments she had sometimes entertained for the Count: *No, there's only you*, said she, *who merits to be beloved*; and finding her self seiz'd with a remnant of dying Affection, she took and kiss'd it. *Ah! This is too much*, cry'd out the Duke at the same time, who could no longer contain himself, at this Action, and taking his Sword in his hand he rusht towards the Arbour-door, and was infallibly going to kill this Princess, if the Count, who made up immediately, did not

with-

with held his Arm. The Princeſs fell into a Swoon, perhaps as much from the ſurprize ſhe was in to ſee the Count, as at her Husbands rage. The Duke on his part let fall his Sword out of grief at his being bound to kill a Woman whom he tenderly loved, but whom he thought he was no longer bound to love after what he had ſeen. The Count only put a good face upon the matter, tho' to ſpeak the truth, he had no more reaſon to laugh than the reſt. He gueſs'd by the Letters he ſaw upon the Table, and the Picture the Dutcheſs ſtill held in her hands, whence the Duke's rage proceeded, and thinking he had no leſs reaſon than he to be Jelous, he was ſo much the more to be pitied, as that he was oblig'd not to let the leaſt appear of what he had at heart.

The Dutcheſs's Swoon was not long, and the firſt thing ſhe did after

after, having open'd her eyes, was this: *What have I done to you, Sir, that you would needs kill me, and that you muſt needs take the Count for a Witneſs of your Jelouſy? How, what you have done to me?* the Duke reply'd, *What, joyn Impudence to Shame? This is what I can ne're endure, and which indeed is inſupportable.* Upon theſe words he endeavoured to burſt out of the Count's hands, to Sacrifice her to his Reſentment, and Madam *d'Elbœuf* let fall the Picture out of fear, endeavouring to ſave her ſelf around the Table. This Picture fell pretty near the Count, and endeavouring to take it up, yet without letting *Mr. d'Elbœuf* go, he did ſo tho' with ſome difficulty. He immediately caſt his eyes upon it; but his ſurprize was not ſmall, when he ſaw it to be the Dukes. Nor ſmall was that of this Prince, when he perceiv'd it to be his own Picture, and what would

would he not have giv'n to have repaired what he had done? He threw himſelf at his Wifes feet, proteſting to her that he would remain there eternally, unleſs ſhe would pardon him. In the mean while the Count being as jealous of the Duke as he could have been of a Lover, endeavour'd to contain himſelf, that he might not make known what paſs'd in his heart; not being however able to contain his Curioſity, he caſt his eyes upon the Letters, while the Duke who was in the poſture of a Supplicant had his back turn'd, and he really ſaw that they were Love-Letters, which the Dutcheſs had formerly received from her Husband. This was new matter of vexation to him, eſpecially when he ſaw that the Dutcheſs, without otherwiſe remembring what had happened, threw her Arms about the Duke's Neck, not only promiſing him never to re-

member what had newly happen'd, but also to impute all to the Affection he had for her.

This Reconciliation having thus been made in the Count's presence, they all went to the Castle, where the Duke forbid all to speak of his arrival. The Count was there witness of several Caresses they made one another, which cast him under the utmost Despondency. To free himself from so ungratefull a Scene, he would needs take leave of the Duke, and return to *Blandi*; But the Duke, who could not stay long so near the Court, without it's being known, and who fear'd the worst from the Cardinals ill will, entreated him to deferr a day or two, & that he would go along with him. Tho' the Term was short, it lasted a long time to the Count *de Soissons*, who that he might no longer be a Witness of the same things he had seen, since he

he had been in that Houſe, was almoſt continually in the Wood, poſſeſs'd with his amorous thoughts. One day that he went thither very early, Madam *d'Elbœuf*, who notwithſtanding her Reconciliation with her Husband, had nevertheleſs an eye to all he did, being curious of knowing what he did there, went thither preſently after him, and having walk'd from one end of the Grove to the other without finding him, ſhe bethought her ſelf of going to the Arbour where her Husband had met her. He had gone in there, as a place befitting his penſive thoughts, and having plac'd himſelf upon the Bank that went round the table, he lean'd his Head upon his hand, making it evident by his Countenance, that he had ſome great matter of Sadneſs. Madam *d'Elbœuf* who was plac'd exactly to look him in the face, at the ſame time made the

Application of his muſing to her ſelf, and tho' by all I have already ſaid, it is manifeſt that ſuch a ſight could not be over-gratefull to her, ſhe nevertheleſs felt ſome ſatisfaction in telling her ſelf that it was for her ſake that this Prince ſigh'd.

While ſhe was wholly poſſeſs'd with this thought the Prince gave ſeveral ſighs, which melted her ſtill the more. But ſhe was quickly diverted from theſe tender movements by an action of his, for he took a Picture out of his Pocket, and viewing it amorouſly he ſaid ſome words, but ſo low that ſhe could not underſtand them; after which kiſſing it ſtill more amouroufly than he had veiw'd it, he did the ſame thing five or ſix times with ſuch a Tranſport, that it ſtrangely amaz'd her. However it had been nothing had ſhe proceeded no farther than Amazement, but ſhe was ſenſible notwithſtanding

notwithſtanding all ſhe could ſay to her ſelf, that ſhe was more concern'd at it than became her. She a thouſand times call'd him faithleſs in her heart, which ſtill more amazing her, than at what ſhe had ſeen, ſhe fanci'd ſhe could not too ſoon get away from a place where her virtue ran ſo much riſque of being undone. This was her Reſolution; but which was quickly bely'd by her heart. She again in ſpight of her ſelf peept through the Arbour, and ſeeing the Count there ſtill in the ſame Poſture, her jelouſy redoubl'd to ſuch a point as made her do what her virtue had not done. *Let's fly*, whiſper'd ſhe to her ſelf, *the ſight of a Man that is Unworthy of the Trouble he darts into my heart, and whoſe Infidelity ought to render him a thouſand times more odious than he ever appear'd lovely to me.* In ſaying this away went ſhe from that Place, but ſo beſides her ſelf, that

ſhe did not mind that her Gown was faſten'd upon a Branch. And as ſhe bruſht through haſtily, ſhe made a noiſe in tearing off her Cloaths, and this noiſe having rouz'd the Count out of his Amorous thoughts he put again his Picture haſtily into his Pocket, and coming out of the Arbour-door to ſee whence it proceeded, he was ſtrangely Surpriz'd when he ſaw the Ducheſs whom he could not but know, though her back was turn'd. He ran after her, and having quickly overtaken her: *Whither do you run Madam*, ſaid he to her, *and after having had the Cruelty to forbid me to ſpeak to you of a Paſſion that has tormented me ſo long, would you ſtill be ſo Cruell as to deprive me of your Preſence, when Fortune does afford it me? Conſider what violence I have done my ſelf, in refraining to ſee you: Conſider my Affliction in knowing you ſick, & incapacitated from giving you any eaſe. Add*

to

to this my vexation at my not being permitted to go to your Door to Enquire after your health, & you will certainly conclude that never any trouble was comparable to mine. Nevertheless this is not all that I have been oblig'd to Suffer, I have been forc'd to be my self a Witness of your tenderness for a Husband, I must compose my looks, Shun your eyes; what shall I say? In short, appear quite different from what I am, and when for to ease my mind after so many torments, which any other than I would have sunk under, Heaven now permits that I might see you one moment without so much Constraint; you fly me Madam, as if all I have now said did not merit some Pitty.

Madam *de Elbœuf* had stood still at his first words, and she was very much Surpriz'd after what she her self had seen, to hear him speak in that manner, yet thinking that it became her rather to give Credit to what she

had ſeen then to what ſhe now heard, ſhe arm'd her ſelf with a Certain Haughtineſs that was natural to her, and looking upon him with great Contempt; *Your Birth*, ſaid ſhe to him, *ſets you above me; but in ſhort, mine is not ſo Inferiour to yours as to allow you with impunity to make a Mock of a Princeſs.* The Count who expected quite another anſwer, was mightily ſurpriz'd at this, wherein the Dutcheſs ſeem'd to him more incredulous then Cruel. Inſomuch that imagining all he had to do was to undeceive her. *Ah! would to God Madam*, ſaid he to her, *that I had only to Combat the unjuſt Suſpicion I now obſerve in your Anſwer; With how much eaſe could I bring that about, I that have done for you more then ever Man will do for a Miſtreſs: Where ſhall you ſee, not a Prince of the Bloud as I am, but a Meer Gentleman, that would have renounc'd ſo great an Eſtabliſhment as*

I have done? Who would baniſh himſelf from Court for fear of diſpleaſing you, and who after having paſs'd a long time in that Exile, returns as fond and as Paſſionate as ever, to tell you, that it is only you he Loves? Where is the Lover that after having been Witneſs as I have been theſe two days of the Affection you have for your Husband ſhould ſtill Perſevere in his Paſſion? What can I ſay to my ſelf upon ſuch a ſight, ſave that there are no hopes for me, yet has not this been Capable of making me deſiſt, and you ſtill ſee me the ſame you ever ſaw me.

The Princeſs knew not how to reconcile theſe words with the action ſhe had ſeen him do, but what troubl'd her ſtill more, was how to reconcile her Virtue with a Converſation ſo Contrary to it. In this Perplexity ſhe remain'd ſad and Confuſed, and the Count being ſtrangely amaz'd at her ſilence, and at the State he ſaw her in; *What is the Meaning of this Madam,*

Application of his musing to her self, and tho' by all I have already said, it is manifest that such a sight could not be over-gratefull to her, she nevertheless felt some satisfaction in telling her self that it was for her sake that this Prince sigh'd.

While she was wholly possess'd with this thought the Prince gave several sighs, which melted her still the more. But she was quickly diverted from these tender movements by an action of his, for he took a Picture out of his Pocket, and viewing it amorously he said some words, but so low that she could not understand them; after which kissing it still more amourously than he had veiw'd it, he did the same thing five or six times with such a Transport, that it strangely amaz'd her. However it had been nothing had she proceeded no farther than Admazement, but she was sensible notwithstanding

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dam, he answered, *and are you sorry for having unjustly accus'd me, or do Persevere you in your injustice? speak, let not Pitty make you silent, and know that in the Present Extremity of my Affliction, you can render me but little more Miserable.* The Dutchess still laboring under the same Perplexity, knew not what to resolve on; But at last being provok'd to the highest degree, that a man that she had seen kiss anothers picture, should dare to discourse her in this manner, she no longer gave ear save to her resentment. Wherefore darting him a look, wherein Anger sparkled amid Jelousy: *This is too much*, said she to him, *thus to offend me doubly; I know that my Circumstances do not allow me to admit any such Discourse, and as you your self know it, 'tis a reason that should impose silence on you, and which by Consequence, when you break it, you make me sensible of the little Consideration you*

have

have for me. But to do it, when you have no inclinations to induce you, and that might excuse you, is, properly speaking, a Trepan, and for which I must own to you, that I should be over-joy'd to have the opportunity of being reveng'd. The Count would have interrupted her, & shewn her the injustice of her accusation, but the Dutchess to prevent him; *Let's lay aside,* said she to him, *so many needless Discourses, and to make an end of all at once. know that I my self saw you kiss a Picture but a moment ago; and as I know very well it is none of mine, you must not take it ill if I refer you to it as often, & whenever for the passing your time, your fancy shall lead you to entertain me with your Amorous Discourses.*

The Count, who attributed to his misfortune, all the harsh words he had newly heard from the Princess, was overjoy'd to find the source of them in another subject. And unwilling to undeceive

her

her without first discovering why she appear'd so sensible to that sight; *True, indeed, Madam,* said he to her, *I did put a Picture near my face; but who told you it was that of a Mistress? I never thought of kissing it; but finding that it smelt very finely, I was willing to recreate my self with the scent of it; and yet this is the whole matter upon which you ground your accusation. Pish, pish,* Madam, *d'Elbœuf* cry'd, *you might thus perhaps impose upon others, but I am not to be caught by so slender a wile, and assure your self you'l find no such easy Creatures here.*

The Count was transported with joy at his hearing all these reproaches, whence he inferr'd, that peradventure he was not indifferent to her. Wherefore still more and more to detect how his case was, *Yet what I told you, Madam, was true,* he said to her; *Besides, Madam, what would my insincerity avail with you? You that have*

eyes only for your Husband, and not content with the expreſſions you might give him of it in Private, cannot refrain from rend'ring me my ſelf Witneſs of it? After this, what hopes can I have, and can any thing elſe beſides the Power of Truth oblige me to pitty my ſelf? 'Tis you that I love; and tho' I were reduc'd to diſſemble, it would nevertheleſs eaſily be perceived, that 'tis you that poſſeſſes my heart, tho' my Deſires ſhould ſeem tending for another. That is to ſay, Madam *d'Elbœuf* reply'd, *that I ought not to have any regard to what I have ſeen, and that I ought rather to credit your words. Yes, Madam,* the Count renew'd, *and if I was ſo happy, as it is far from it, that you had the leaſt of thoſe Weakneſſes for me, which you have for your Husband, I aſſure you, that you far from having any Jelouſy of that Picture, would be overjoy'd that I had it ever in my hands. How! is it a Remedy of Love,* Madam *d'Elbœuf* immediately repartee'd?

and

and perchance without making reflexion on her promptneſs, ſince this alone was capable of diſcovering what ſhe was willing to conceal. *I ſay not ſo, Madam*, the Count retorted, *but all I can ſay to you is, that tho' your Husband himſelf ſhould have this Picture, I aſſure you it would not give you one moments diſturbance.* This had been a ſufficient hint, had Madam *d'Elbœuf* the leaſt ſuſpected his having her Picture; but being very far from any ſuch thought; *'Tis matter of Fact, then*, ſaid ſhe to him, *and if you'l give me leave to view it, I ſhall be able to judge how far you are i'th' Right.*

This is what the Count waited for, and deriving from her Curioſity moſt advantageous Conſequences for himſelf: *Yes, Madam*, ſaid he to her, *I'le ſhew it you; But give me leave firſt to make it the due Reparation of Honour. I told you a while ago that I did not kiſs it, and now I muſt tell you that I adore it's*

Original,

Original, and which is more, that I shall adore it as long as I live, notwithstanding her Cruelty. Upon these words he gave her that Picture, and the Dutchess mightily concern'd at what she had newly heard, lookt upon it with so much Precipitation, that it alone was sufficient to give him to understand that she acted out of another motive than that of Curiosity. But oh the Operation when she saw it was her own Picture! She not only changed Colour, but also casting down her eyes, as if she had been caught doing some ill Action: *Ah! Prince,* she said to him, *what delight can you take in Creating trouble to your self? And if it be true that you love me, what do you expect from a Passion that cannot be approved of, and for which it is still more difficult to be grateful? I know it very well, Madam,* the Count made answer, *and you also see that I had the Discretion never to speak of*

it

it to you more; I confin'd my Griefs within my own Bosom, and if I had not perceiv'd that you was going to think of me that I lov'd another, my silence should have expres's'd to you, that let it have cost me what it would to have obey'd you, I had so much Love and Respect for your Commands, that I would have dy'd a thousand times sooner than have disobey'd you. Thus you must blame your self if I did it; It was for you to have believ'd that I could love no other after having lov'd you: If you do not believe me, you need only view your own Picture, it represents the most lovely Person that ever was, and would you not own that I had but very little Judgment, did I not preferr it before all things?

The Occasion that was offer'd for the Count to express his Passion, was so very Charming to him, that he did not remember to redemand his Picture. The surprize also that Princess was in, or perhaps her joy to see him faithfull, when

when ſhe had imagin'd him far from being ſo, did ſo poſſeſs her thoughts that ſhe had not as yet dreamt of asking him whence he had it. But when theſe firſt Transports were Evaporated on Both ſides, the Count with great reaſon apprehending that ſhe would not reſtore it him, requir'd it of her at the ſame time that ſhe had her mouth open to know of him whence he had it. The Ducheſs did not ſtand to Conſider what Courſe to take, ſhe abſolutely refus'd it him, and after having known by what means he had had it, ſhe ſaid it was not reaſonable he ſhould availe himſelf of a thing that belong'd to another, and which would engage her Conſcience. That ſhe intended to ſend it again to the Dutcheſs of *Savoy*; but that ſhe would take her meaſures ſo well that it ſhould not have the ſame Deſtiny on the way. She ſaid theſe laſt words

words to him ſmiling, as if ſhe had a mind to ſweeten his Concern for her Denyal, or rather as if ſhe was minded to give him the hint, that ſince he had been able to get it ſo dexterouſly, the ſame ways were open to him, ſince he was refus'd in his Requeſt. The Count did not conſider this at firſt, and was ſo poſſeſs'd with the Deſire of having it again, that his aim lay wholly upon Employing his Rhetorick to prevaile with her; but not ſpeeding in that, he made it his Bus'neſs to enquire when the Picture was to be diſpatch'd, and laid People in Ambuſcade, that ſo he might not faile of it.

While all this paſs'd, the Cardinal being ever poſſeſs'd with the ſame thoughts, that is to ſay, being ever in Love with the Dutcheſs, he gain'd a maid of Hers, whom ſhe honour'd ſo far as to make her her Confident. ſhe let him

him know that the Count and the Duke were at *Villemareuil*, and as he had the Addreſs to make the King believe all he was minded, he inſinuated to him that thoſe two Princes being ſo near his Court, not only without coming to pay him their Reſpects, but alſo *incognito*, they muſt have ſome ill Deſign againſt his Perſon; This was ſufficient for the obtaining an order to take them into Cuſtody: But Mr. *de Chavigny* Secretary of State, who was to ſign it, being the Count *de Soiſſons* particular friend, had no ſooner expedited it, but that before it was deliver'd into their hands, who were to put it into Execution, he by an expreſs Courier ſent to acquaint him of what occur'd. The Count having ſhew'd the Intimation he had newly receiv'd to the Duke of *Elbœuf*, This Prince who dreaded the Cardinal ſo much the more, as knowing that to indulge the

the Paſſion he had for his Wife, he would omit no manner of means, ſaid at the ſame time that it was neçeſſary to be gone, but that they muſt firſt put themſelves in diſguiſe. The Count *de Soiſſons* was ſomewhat of the ſame opinion, tho' to ſpeak the truth he was very loath to quit an abode, where he ſaw all he had moſt dear, the Dutcheſs who was of the Council, went her ſelf to fetch two habits, which with ſome others ſhe had caus'd to be made for the *Capuchins* of *Meaux*, who receiv'd of her Charity, and caus'd theſe two Princes to put them on. But both finding that there wanted Beards to theſe Robes, they ſent to ſeek for falſe ones in the Duke's Guard-robe, where ſome were by chance, by reaſon of a Maſquerade he had made ſome years before at *Monceaux*, the habits of which had been carried to *Villemarnel*.

Tho' Conſidering their Circumſtances

cumſtances it was no very ſeaſonable time to make love, it is nevertheleſs certain that the Count ever & anon caſt his eyes upon the Dutcheſs, to give her to underſtand, that all unhappy as he was in her preſence, he was going to be infinitely more, when he ſhould be remote from her. The Dutcheſs on her part was not exempt from the uneaſineſs that an approaching abſence is wont to create, and though ſhe us'd her utmoſt endeavours to repreſs thoſe ſentiments, it was impoſſible for her to effect it, ſhe was ſurpriz'd at her Weakneſs, and as ſhe was in ſuch a Diſorder as was eaſy to be perceiv'd, ſhe was overjoy'd that ſhe had a pretence to cloak it. The Privation of her Husband being the fineſt Pretext ſhe could uſe, ſhe fail'd not to improve it. In the mean while her heart every moment giving her the lye, ſhe caſt her eyes ever and anon upon the

the Count, and finding his inceſſantly fix'd upon her, it was impoſſible for her to hinder hers from being affected. Nothing convinc'd him better of it than what ſhe did. After having Embrac'd her Husband ſeveral times, not only to bid him Adieu, but likewiſe to make him a kind of reparation for what ſhe dar'd to do in his Preſence, as ſhe drew near the Count, who made up to Salute her, ſhe dexterouſly reſtor'd him her Picture; a favour which ſo rejoyc'd that Prince, that he now thought nor the leaſt of the misfortune under which he had like to have ſunck before. But for as much as that the Princeſs was mightily out of Countenance at what ſhe had newly done, ſhe only ſought to conceal her Diſorder, and as after ſuch an Action as that, ſhe had much ado to bear his looks, ſhe feign'd that her Affliction for the Departure of ſo

Dear

Dear a Husband, did not allow her to be preſent at it.

Thus can Perſons of addreſs diſſemble upon Occaſion: And indeed the Duke preſuming himſelf to be the only Cauſe of her being in that Condition, went away ſo very ſorrowfull, that one would have ſaid that he had parted from her for all his Life. I ſhall not ſay how the Count laid it to heart, it is eaſy to apprehend that as the Deſires of a Lover are incomparably ſtronger than thoſe of a Husband, in like manner there was a vaſt difference as to what they Both underwent upon the thoughts of the enſuing Abſence.

On the way they met with the Guards that were ſent to take them into Cuſtody, and if they had not been diſguis'd as they were, certain it is that they had not eſcap'd their Cluches: But they far from ſuſpecting that they had what they ſought for, before

their

their eyes, they let em pass, without taking the least notice of their Persons. These two Princes were not without some apprehensions at this sight, and at first imagin'd that these Guards had had notice of their march, for as much as that the way they took was not that of *Monceaux*. But this had been done by meer hazzard, and the Guards had thought fitting to go a by Road, that no suspition might be harbour'd where their aim lay.

By good luck the Duchess had not as yet reveal'd their retreat, or Disguise to her Confident, and after the Guards had invested the Castle, He who Commanded them, enter'd with some of them, and ask'd the Domesticks for the Count and the Duke *d' Elbœuf*. But they giving him no account, he went up to the Duchesses Chamber, to whom he made the same Compliment. But as she was at a loss what answer to make

make them, as whether they had been in the Castle, or were gone, she remain'd some time without replying; which vexing the Officer: *What I ask of you, Madam,* said he to her, *is only to spare you the vexation of seeing me ferret every Corner. If I do not find them in one place I shall find them in another, and you may easily judge that having caus'd your Castle to be invested, they cannot escape me; since I am certain of their being here.* Madam *d' Elbœuf*, who during this Compliment had had time to make reflexion that the longer she detain'd him, the fairer would the opportunity be for the Count and her Husband to make their escape, bid him then search where he pleas'd, and that for her part, she knew nothing of what he enquir'd. Upon this the Officer left not a Corner unsearcht, but no body being to be found, he left his Guards a-round the Castle,

and posted away to give the Cardinal an account of what he had done. This put his Eminency into a Passion against him, and after having told him that his head should answer for his Commission, he sent him back with a Letter for the Dutchess's Confident, whom he entreated to tell the Bearer what was become of the Count and Duke.

The Officer being return'd to the Castle perform'd his Message, and the Damzel, who as I have said, had not been made privy to the Secret, thinking those two Princes to be still there, bid him search, and that he would find them. In the mean while they got to the Frontiers of *Champagne*, and being come into the House of a Gentleman, who was the Count's friend, they shifted their Cloaths and took others more conformable to their State. Thence they withdrew to *Sedan*, where

where luckily for them they arriv'd the moment they did; an hour or two later had been too late. And indeed, the Officer after having search'd *Villemureuil* from one end to the other, had no sooner perceiv'd the rest of the Cloaths which Madam *d'Elbœuf* had caus'd to be made for the Capuchins, but that he suspected that those two Princes had made their escape in those Equipages, nay, and that they were the two Religious he had met. Now this suspicion growing still stronger and stronger in his mind, he trac'd 'em to the very Gentlemans house, where they had made a halt, and finding there also the two Habits that had serv'd for their Disguise, he endeavour'd to find out which way they had taken thence, and finding it to be that of *Sedan*, he pursued them, but in vain, even as far as under the Walls of that Town.

Having related all these Circumstances to the Cardinal, his Eminency being very willing to Cloak his Love with the good of the State, left Guards at *Villemarevil* to secure the Dutchess for himself. Nay he went to see her, as he told the King, to shrift into her Husbands Designs Yet when with her, that was the least of his Discourse. On the contrary he told her that he was very unhappy, in that Love oblig'd him against his will, to use violence, which was in no wise his Inclination; that a word of her mouth would call back her Husband when she pleas'd; but that as for the Count *de Soissons*, he was too jealous of him ever to suffer his return. Madam *d'Elbœuf*, who had but little kindness for him before, hated him still more upon his letting her know that he was the Author of the Persecution that Prince suffer'd, on the account of

his

his loving her, desired him to discontinue this discourse. She told him that it ill became him to deceive the King, as he did, and that if she did not know that he had so enchanted the King's Senses, that all she could tell him would be to no purpose, she would go directly to inform him that what occurr'd had quite another source than that he was made to believe. *I do not doubt it, Madam,* the Cardinal made answer, *and your Concern for the Count* de Soissons *would make you do far more; but you who thus threaten me, are not you afraid that I should inform your Husband that you have no mind he should return, unless it be in the Count's Company?* *Go, Madam,* added he, *there needs no more for a man that has some experience of the world, and if I was not withheld by Sentiments that you long since was acquainted withall, what a Tempest might I not raise in your family. But if you are not ca-*

pable of managing your self for my sake, at least do it for your own. True, I love you with so much Passion, that it can never enter into my mind that I should be ever capable of doing you any Injury; But after all, Who can answer for the Discretion of an Unfortunate, and is it not your part to be afraid of my Despair?

Madam *d' Elbeuf* was in some perplexity how to retort to this Discourse. Though he had no reason to threaten her as he did, she could not deny but that he had more in reproaching her, that she did not wish for her Husbands liberty without the Counts. However being almost assur'd that Mr. *d' Elbeuf* would hold suspected all that came from him, she little minded to manage him any longer, and quite the contrary she said so many disobliging things to him that he went away almost mad. He was still full of his Resentment when he arriv'd at *Monceaux*;

ceaux; So that when he came to make his Report to the King, he envenomed his mind against that Princeſs, Inſomuch that his Majeſty was of Opinion to have her taken into Cuſtody, He would have conſented to it in that Rage, if the thing had been conformable to his Intereſts; but conſidering that this would not be only puſhing it too far, but alſo the depriving himſelf of the Conveniency of ſeeing her with the ſame eaſe he might do at *Villemarequil*, he inſinuated into the King that it would be ſufficient to ſet Guards upon her, ſo that thoſe who were in her Houſe had orders to ſtay there. Madam *d'Elbœuf* was highly provok'd at theſe Proceedings, and not being ſuffer'd to go one ſtep, without being every where accompany'd by theſe Guards, her Averſion for the Cardinal augmented in ſuch manner, that now ſhe could not hear him mention'd

without ſhivering.

His Eminency's Confident, who was well paid for minding his Intereſts, did frequently intimate to him that this Princeſs's Spirit was hereby ſo exaſperated, that unleſs he very quickly interpos'd ſome neceſſary remedy, it would be paſt all Reconciliation; that being, as ſhe was, wholly devoted to him, he muſt needs think, ſhe would have as ſtrict an eye to her Conduct as all the Guards in the world could have: That it was therefore expedient to remove 'em out of hand, nay and expreſs ſome repentance to her, rejecting all upon the Paſſion with which ſhe had inflam'd him. The Cardinal found a great deal of reaſon in this Council, and after having recommended Fidelity and exactneſs to her, the Guards were taken away, to the Princeſs's ſatisfaction; but with order to her not to ſtirr from *Villemarcuil*.

As

As soon as the Princes were arriv'd at *Sedan*, the *Spaniards* lying at watch to plunge the Kingdom into a Civil War, had sent a Person of Wit & Authority to them, to offer them to assist them with all their Forces, if they were minded to take up Arms. But Mr. *de Soissons* being unwilling to swerve from his Duty, unless thereunto forc'd by the greatest Persecutions, gave this Envoy for answer, that he was much oblig'd to him for the pains he had taken; but that he could not give him any positive answer until he had seen the measures the Court should take against him. The *Spaniards*, who were very glad to give a Jelousy to the Crown, were cautious of publishing this Answer, and quite the contrary, they endeavoured every where to insinuate that they had made a secret Treaty with him. The Cardinal was the first that was im-

posed on by this Artifice, and not being so much in Love but that he thought of preserving his Authority, which would have run a risque of being subverted during a Civil War, he dispatcht the Count *de Fiesque* to *Sedan*, to persuade the Princes to return to Court. This Lord had ever been one of the Count's intimate Friends, nay and was still as much as he had ever been. On this score was it the Cardinal had pitcht upon him, preferably to many others, hoping the Engagement between them two, would give the more weight to his Negociation. Besides he himself had a Confidence in him: This Lord being poor, had of late made his Court to him, as the only Channel by which Grants and favours could pass. Thus to oblige him to make him speed in this Affair, he promis'd him Mountains and Wonders, and the Count de

Fiesque on his part gave him hopes that he would so efficaciously interpose, that he should have all manner of reason to applaud him for his Services.

Matters being ordered in this manner on both sides, the Count *de Fiesque* was ready to take horse, when he received a Letter by which he had notice given him that if he was still a friend of the Count's, he should be cautious of perswading him to return to Court; that he would be no sooner arrived there, than that he would be clapt up; than the Cardinal who was a Cheat had not made him privy to the Secret, that it was nevertheless a Truth which some had been willing to intimate to him, that so all innocents as he might be of his Friends misfortune, he might not have occasion to upbraid himself as long as he liv'd of having contributed thereunto. This Letter was not now Sign'd

Sign'd, and it was deliver'd by a man who knew not what he brought himself, having receiv'd it from an unknown Person. *De Fiesque* not knowing whether he ought to give Credit thereunto, was very much perplex'd at the sight of it. He was afraid it might be a prank plaid him by some Enemy, who being jealous upon seeing him employ'd by the Minister, made use of this stratagem only to put a stop to the Course of his good fortune. Nevertheless as on the other side he would by no means that it should be imputed to him that he had betray'd the Count, he was no sooner arriv'd at *Sedan*, than after having notify'd to the Prince on what occasion he came, he imparted to him at the same time the intimation he receiv'd at his taking Horse.

The Count did not seem much surpriz'd, and all the answer he made *Mr. de Fiesque*, was, that the worst

worſt was to be expected from the Cardinal, Inſomuch that too much Precaution could not be uſed againſt him; that nevertheleſs as the thing might come from ſome one that had an Intereſt to thwart his return, all things were to be well examin'd, before any body was to be condemn'd: That he did not doubt but that he had kept that Letter, that he begg'd of him to ſhew it him, that he ſhould perhaps know the hand if not that they then ſhould know what they had to do upon it. The Count *de Fieſque* took out the Letter at the ſame time, which he kept very preciouſly, and the Count had no ſooner lookt upon it but that he knew whence it came. He had agreed with *Mr. de Chavigny*, that when he ſhould have any thing to ſignify to him, he would make uſe of a borrowed hand; but to let him know that it came from him, he would thereunto add a certain

ſtroke

ſtroke, which they had agreed on together. Now this ſtroke being upon this Letter: *The advice is good*, ſaid he to the Count *de Fieſque, and I am overjoy'd to ſee that notwithſtanding my Enemies Credit, I have ſtill faithfull Friends*, In ſaying this he embrac'd the Count, and this Lord having receiv'd that Princes Careſſes with a becoming reſpect: *A ſervice of ſuch Moment*, cry'd the Count *de Soiſſons, does well merit that I ſhould have no reſerve for thoſe that pay it me, and as I have the ſame Obligation to you as to the Author of the Letter, I ſhall not only tell you his name, but likewiſe what helps to render the Cardinal and me Enemies. Wee both Love the ſame Beauty*, added he, *and as it is uſual not to bear any good will to an Enemy, it is not to be wonder'd if he Perſecutes me and I hate him. You know I ſcap'd narrowly of falling into his hands at* Villemareuil: *But you know that he is in Love*

with

with Madam d'Elbeuf, and that I have the same Sentiments for that Princess.

It's impossible, cry'd out the Count *de Fiesque* at the same time. *How! his Eminency, who so devoutly acts the Sage and the Philosopher, and who besides has some years o'er his Head, should be Mingle with his important occupations, a Passion that seems reserv'd to youth only, nay and to needless Youth: I mean for those that like you and I pass the three Quarters of the year without knowing how to Employ it. It's however true,* The Count made answer, and that he might leave him no room to question it, he acquainted him with all he knew of the matter, giving him to understand that his thought was better grounded than upon a Bare suspicion. This was the subject of their whole discourse while the Count staid at *Sedan.* In the meah while they both resolv'd to feed the Cardinal

with

with hopes, and the Count *de Fuesque* being got back, he made him believe that upon certain Conditions this Prince was ready to return; but that he demanded to retire to some one of his Lands in *Picardy*, and the Duke of *Elbœuf* unto his Government, whither he pretended his wife should be sent to him. In saying this, he Ey'd the Cardinal, to see if he would change colour, for after what he had now heard, he did expect he would not approve of these Conditions. And indeed, the Cardinal did thereupon burst out into an Exclamation, as if there had been a Design to have excluded him from the Ministry: *How*, answer'd he him all in a fury *Did I undertake you to propose such a Treaty, and when you took leave of me, did I not tell you that it was my Court I was minded they should return? True*, the Count reply'd, *but if I gave ear to these Proposals, it*

was because that when I was with them I perceiv'd that nothing could Secure them against their Suspicions, more than a Retreat wherein they might think themselves under shelter against your Power. And as I know you will never harbour any ill Design against their Persons, as long as they shall not Embroil the State, I thought that you would rather choose to see them Both where they require, than in a Place where bad Council may pervert them. The Duke of Bouillon *stands not over-well Affected to your Eminency.* Lamboy *besides, who commands the Enemies forces in those Parts only wants to be in Action. Wherefore I should think it to be requisite to hinder those Princes from having Commerce with two such Dangerous Men, and which you'l do if you grant them what they require.*

The Count *de Fiesque*, after having thus taken delight in thwarting him, seeing that he became angry in good earnest, did not think

think fitting to push things farther. He told him, that having advanc'd nothing that was subject to ratification, it was sufficient that it did not please him to let it drop so: that he had promis'd the Count *de Soissons* to return to *Sedan*, in case his Eminency approv'd of his Propositions, that not going thither would be sufficient to let him know that they were ungratefull. *You say right*, the Cardinal made answer, *but you do not see that I would have him return to Court, and as that is not the Right Course which you have taken, you must return thither to endeavour to set all things to Rights.*

Thus did the Count take a second Journey to *Sedan*, and several others after that to endeavour to bring the Prince back to Court. In the mean while the King and Cardinal were return'd to *Paris*, and his Eminency being far from permitting Madam *d' Elbœuf* to

stay

ſtay at *Villemeruel*, while he was at a diſtance from it, caus'd a Privy-Seal to be diſpatcht, by which ſhe was enjoyn'd to follow the Court. Repairing to *Paris* in conformity to this order ſhe there led a moſt languiſhing Life, which her friends attributed to her Husbands Abſence. But ſhe could eaſily undeceive them, if ſhe had been minded, and ſhe dayly perceiv'd that the Count *de Soiſſons* ſhar'd as deep in her ſadneſs as the Duke *d'Elbœuf*. She repreſented him to her ſelf as a Prince not only of an accompliſht merit, but likewiſe of a moſt extraordinary Tenderneſs. But what ſtill imprinted him deeper in her heart, was the Perſecution he was expos'd to for the Love of her, and which he nevertheleſs prefer'd before all things. This is what he had aſſur'd her of ever, & as often as he found the Occaſion to diſcourſe her, and the remembrance

of

of which he would fain have renew'd to her by his Letters, principally since the favour he had received from her. But this Princess reproaching her self continually for the favour she had granted him, not being willing he should have an ill opinion of her Virtues, had not only refus'd all the Letters he had sent her, but she farther writ to him the following one.

Madam *d' Elbœuf's* Letter to the Count *de Soissons*.

Nothing hinders me from telling you that I wish your Esteem before that of all other People, were I not afraid that you should Interpret it too much to your advantage. After what I have done for you, your vanity

vantity would be excuſable, and you may have ſo ill an Opinion of me, as to think me capable of all. However ſuſpend your Judgment, till you know me thoroughly. In giving you my Picture, I thought much leſs of making you a Preſent, then a Reſtitution. Perhaps I may be miſtaken, I own that I did it without much Reflexion. But let it be as it will, I aſſure you the uncertainty I am under of having done well or ill, makes me ſo uneaſy, that I have no r·poſe Day nor Night. If you have any value for me, pitty the State I have brought my ſelf to. Send me back what I gave you, and thereby ſhall I

Judge

Judge whether you really Love me.

The Bearer of this Letter, having let the Count know that he ſhould be glad to ſpeak with him in private, and from whom he came, this Prince was ſo ſeiz'd with joy, that all I can ſay to expreſs it would be nothing in Compariſon. He at firſt imagin'd, as many would have imagin'd as well as he, after the favour the Dutcheſs had conferr'd on him, that it was ſome new one that ſhe had prepar'd for him. But what a ſtrange reverſe for him, when he had read what I have repeated? He reſolv'd a thouſand various thoughts in his mind at the ſame time, and that he dwelt on moſt was that the Cardinal had at the long run triumph'd o're her Cruelty, or by his Perſeverance of his Preſents. After theſe ſad Re-

flexion

flexions, he was at a Loſs, what to ſay to the Man who demanded an Anſwer, and after ſeveral Conflicts he writ at follows.

The Count de Soiſſons *Letter to Madam* d' Elbœuf.

If you had only ask'd my Life, I ſhould have ſent it you, as ſoon as I had known your Will: But as what you require of me, is infinitely dearer to me, do not think it ſtrange that I am longer in reſolving upon it. Nevertheleſs I muſt tell you that I am determin'd to ſatisfy you, let it coſt me what it will; It is an effort which you could only expect from ſuch an affection as mine.

I say no more to you Madam, and indeed what can I say that can in the least Express my Affections: Great it is certainly, not to say it is Extreme, God grant I may quickly sinck under it But after all this shall not hinder me from gratifying you at a time you least expect it.

Having dispatcht the Man back, he was contriving how he might go to *Paris*, notwithstanding the danger, and especially how he might deceive *Mrs d' Elbœuf*, and *de Bouillon*, who would not know what to think if they saw him distance himself from the Town. And after having duely consider'd on it he found no better means then to act the *Inamorato* of a certain Citt, who had some Beauty, and who

who ſpent part of the year at a Country-houſe ſhe had about half a League from *Sedan*. He went to ſee her there ſeveral times, that ſo it might not be look'd on as ſtrange, when he ſhould be ſome days without appearing, and having thereby prepared Peoples minds, he one fine night took Poſt; but ſo well diſguis'd, that tho' he had met a thouſand of his acquaintance upon the way, not one would have known him. He arriv'd by night at *Paris*, for fear of Accident, and found in a certain Inn where he alighted, a man whom he had diſpatch'd away before, and in whom he confided; this Perſon had bought up all that he found rare at *Paris* in matter of knick-knacks, with a little Male to put 'em in. He had alſo provided a Suit of Cloaths to diſguiſe him, & this Prince having put 'em on, and his Load upon his Back, he reſolv'd to go attend

upon Madam *d'Elbœuf's* Leavy.

This Princeſs was extremely curious of thoſe ſort of things, and not once only had he ſeen her viſit all *Paris* to indulge that humour. Thus not doubting but that he ſhould be wellcome, he went to *Elbœuf*-Hall, and had her inform'd of what he brought. This Princeſs commanded his admittance, and without minding his Perſon, & the leſs for that ſhe was at her Toilette, ſhe bid him go into a Cloſet, where ſhe would all alone view his Toys, for fear that if ſhe took any one along with her, they ſhould go tell what ſhe had bought, before ſhe had had the pleaſure of ſpeaking of it her ſelf. And foraſmuch as that Curioſity did not allow her to deferr any longer, ſhe got up juſt in the Condition ſhe was in, and went to this new Merchant. As he was diſguis'd, no leſs than Divination could have ſuſpected

who

who he was. Besides he Counterfeited his voice so well, that the Princess did not imagine she had any reason to make the least reflexion upon his Person. By this means all her eyes were wholly taken up with contemplating his Merchandize, among which she found a thousand things with which she was Enchanted. What most pleas'd her, were the Pictures of some Princesses of *Europe*, whose Beauty was such, that after having considered them, she told the Merchant, that it was not possible they should be so handsom as the Painter made them. *Pardon me, Madam*, the pretended Merchant made answer, *I have seen the most part of them, and if there be any thing to be said between the Originals and the Copies, it is that the Painter with all his Art has not been able to attain to make 'em as perfect as they really are.* He disguis'd his voice so well in say-

ing this, that the Princeſs did not in any wiſe diſtruſt who he was.

However in caſe ſhe had in the leaſt obſerv'd his Eyes, and the divers Motions of his Countenance, it had been impoſſible but that ſhe muſt have perceiv'd that he was quite another Perſon than what he was minded to appear. He was inflam'd to ſuch a Degree, not only at the Perſonage he was obliged to act, but alſo thro' his Paſſion, that his looks, as I may ſay, pierc'd to the very bottom of her heart. And indeed, how could he, who was Paſſionately in Love, behold her in the manner ſhe was, without dying of Love, ſince any other, how indifferently ſoever he might have been, would have become ſenſible in ſeeing her. She had only one Petticoat on, and a *Holland* Waſtcoat, cover'd with Lace, thro' which one ſaw things capable of enflaming the moſt frigid,

frigid, with much more reaſon, him who was paſſionately in Love. Beſides her neck that was of an Extraordinary whiteneſs, appear'd ſo then a thouſand times more, by reaſon of the blackneſs of her Hair, that hung down upon her ſhoulders. Her Complexion receiv'd the ſame advantage from this undreſs, and they were as ſo many Charms, that the more faſcinated a Lover.

Thus the Count being no longer able to reſiſt them, meant to cut ſhort without dallying any longer; and finding he had a fair occaſion for ſo doing: *All theſe Pictures, Madam,* he renew'd, *which you ſo much admire, are fine indeed, and you are not the firſt that thought at the firſt ſight of them, that the Painter had thereunto added ſomething of his own. However to ſhew you that he is faithfull, I'le ſhew you ſome that I have of this Court, by the viewing of which you will judge*

that his whole aim has been to imitate Nature. In saying this he took out those of the Queen, of the Princess of *Conde*, and of some Ladies of the Court, who might pass for handsome; but which the Dutchess however found nothing in Comparison of those she had seen: Thus she fell to viewing 'em again, and the Count seeing how wedded she was to them: *Cease Madam*, he interpos'd, *considering so attentively things that so little deserve the pains, and since your judgment is so good, reserve your admiration for all that is most Beautyfull in Nature. I have kept you the most excellent for the last, and without being oblig'd to part with it by a Power whom I am constrain'd to obey in spight of me, all the Riches in the world are not of the worth I esteem it.*

If the Dutchess had had the least Distrust of what pass'd, what he now said had been more than needfull a thousand times to make her

her apprehend the reſt: But as this was what ſhe leaſt dreamt of: *Let's ſee*, ſaid ſhe to him, *that Toy you prize ſo highly, and after what I have ſeen it muſt be ſomething very fine to deface all the reſt.* After theſe words ſhe reach'd forth her hand to the Pretended Merchant to receive the Picture he held in his, and having it done up in a Box, the largeneſs of the Diamonds that were upon it amaz'd her, yet without imagining what it could be. But ſhe had no ſooner open'd that Box, but that her Amazement was incomparably greater, as ſoon as ſhe found her own Picture. She caſt her eyes at the ſame time upon him that had given it her, and tho' ſhe ſhould ſtill have remain'd in ignorance as to his Perſon, ſhe could not now have remain'd any longer in the dark. For the Count judging that a longer Diſguiſe would be in no wiſe for his turn, threw him-

ſelf at her feet, and embracing her knees: *Yes, Madam*, he ſaid to her, *There's a Picture I value above all the Riches in the World, nay more than my own Life. Yet would you deprive me of it, tho' you very well know, that the parting with it will occaſion my Death. But no matter, I was reſolv'd at any rate to content you, being ſure that tho' I am ſo unhappy as not to draw your Compaſſion while I live, it will be impoſſible for you to refuſe it me after my Death.*

He ſaid this with a certain Accent that was ſtill more affecting than his words, and the Dutcheſs being toucht to the very heart, had only the power to anſwer him: *How, Prince, is it then you, and do not my eyes deceive me?* In ſaying this ſhe went to ſit her ſelf down in a Chair that was near the Window, and the Count having followed her: *Yes Madam, 'tis me*, to her he ſaid, *who am come to ſhew you by a Blind Obedience, how ſubmiſſive*

ſubmiſſive I ſhall ever be to your will. What Command could you have laid upon me more ungratefull than that of ſending your Picture back? Yet, what greater Obedience can you deſire, than the bringing of it my ſelf? But Madam, he added, *do not puſh your Cruelty further; Let it be ſufficient that you have Experienc'd what I was capable of doing for your ſake; a greater Sacrifice cannot but be prejudicial to you as well as to me. I ſhould loſe my Life, and for your part, you would loſe a Prince, whoſe Conſervation muſt be of importance to you, if it be true that you in the leaſt Eſteem thoſe that Eſteem you above all the World together.*

The Dutcheſs perceiving that this Converſation inſtill'd ſtrange tendernesſes in o her heart, and apprehending it might make her commit ſome Weakneſs unbecoming a Princeſs, turn'd her Eyes from off him, and ſeeking to ſpeak of other matters: *How*

does my Husband? to him she said; *Is he not much concern'd, much troubled at my absence? Ah! Madam,* the Count retorted at these words, *is this a Discourse for the present time? Does he not write t'ye when he pleases? And is it not his business to give you an account of all you ask me? Why am I allow'd to do the same, and would you after that think it necessary to inform you of the Sentiments I should have in your absence? Why not,* the Dutchess made him answer, *if you were my Husband? Do not you know that People ever doubt of their happiness, and whatever assurance they may have, they are glad to have still new proofs of it? Ah! Madam,* the Count repartee'd, *Why, am not I in his Place? I should certainly spare you the trouble of enquiring that of any other than my self? I would tell it you that you should be weary of it at the long run; but I perceive the happiness of others makes*

me

me forget my own Unhappineſs, far from poſſeſſing the Original, you have the Cruelty as not to leave me ſo much as the Copy. Is it poſſible you ſhould continue in this Injuſtice; Nay, and though you ſhould not ſuffer your ſelf to be wrought upon by my Love, would you be inſenſible to my Obedience.

While they were upon this Subject, word was brought to Madam *d'Elbœuf* that the Cardinal came to ſee her. This Viſit at ſo indecent an hour for the viſiting of Ladies, did ſo ſurprize her that ſhe imagin'd he had got ſome ſecret notice of the Counts coming. She had not ſufficient Power over her mind as to hide her fears, and ſhe that had the hard heart to take her Picture from him again, could not forbear ſaying ſomething to him then that was moſt obliging. The Count, who was leſs ſuſceptible of Apprehenſion, bid her take heart,

heart, and go meet the Cardinal for fear he ſhould come into the Cloſet. But he, wing'd with Love, being mounted into the Chamber, without any Body's introducing him, as he had been told that ſhe was in her Cloſet, he went thither alſo without asking any Body's leave. He wanted little of catching the Count upon his knees, and he was but juſt got up upon the noiſe he had heard, when he came near the door. As his ſhop was diſplaid upon a Table, the Cardinal, all diſtruſtfull as he naturally was, did not harbour any ſuſpicion, and after having caſt his Eyes upon the Pictures, I mention'd before, he ask'd the Dutcheſs whoſe that was ſhe held in her hands. It was her own which ſhe had not had the forecaſt to hide, ſo amaz'd was ſhe at his coming; and the Cardinal having caſt his Eyes upon it: *Ah! Madam*, ſaid he to her, *here's*

here's one that out-vies all the Reſt, however beautifull they may be, and if you had taken it to confront 'em together, it was not neceſſary you ſhould give your ſelf that Trouble, ſince you muſt needs know that there is nothing in any wiſe to be compared to your Beauty.

I leave you to think how much this diſcourſe was diſpleaſing to the pretended Merchant, who tho' he tacitly jump'd in Opinion, that it contain'd nothing but the truth, yet did not he think it lookt well in any bodys Mouth but his own. Nevertheleſs it was not ſo diſagreeable to the Princeſs. In her preſent ſurprize ſhe was very much perplex'd how to anſwer the Cardinal; but what he had newly ſtarted opening her the way: *I really took it*, ſaid ſhe to him, *for what you ſay, but I have found it ſo little to my advantage that quite out of Countenance, I am going to lock it up again.* At theſe

words

words ſhe put it in her Pocket, which equally vex'd the Count and the Cardinal; the later pretending to enjoy the ſight of it longer, & the former hoping for ſomething more reall. The Cardinal who was at Liberty to ſpeak, told her, that as ſhe was a Party in the Cauſe, her Judgment of it was to be waved: That ſhe ought much rather to referr it to him. Whereupon he ask'd of her again the ſight of her Picture, to confront it with the Others: That it was not however requiſite for the giving it the advantage, having before his eyes the original, which was a ſure warrant that nothing was comparable to it; unleſs they went about to judge not only of the features, but alſo of the painting; that it was only on this account, that he ask'd her her repreſentation, not to make a Compariſon of her Beauty, but to decide of the Painters ability.

The

The Cardinal, who had wit as well for entertainment of Gallantry as for matters of ſtate ſaid a thouſand pretty things more upon this Subject. In the mean while he was ſo enflam'd by beholding the Beauties which the Princeſs expos'd to view, that being eager to tell her a great many more ſoft things, he only wanted to diſpatch the Sham Merchant out of the Way. For this purpoſe he ask'd what pleas'd her of his ſhop, and ſhe extolling all in the Lump, that ſhe might not be oblig'd to diſmiſs the Count ſo ſoon, the Cardinal being deſirous to cut ſhort, ask'd the pretended Merchant what he would have for the whole. The Sum the Count ſaid, was immediately agreed to by the Cardinal, and he bid him ſeeing after this he did not as yet go his ways, that he needed only come to his houſe at two of the Clock, and he ſhould have his money paid him. The

Count

Count had nothing to ſay, and being heartily vex'd that he was thus oblig'd to give ground, he went and planted himſelf at a gate that was juſt oppoſite to *Elbœuf-Hall*.

The Cardinals viſit was very long; but as it is with reaſon that People commonly ſay the time is Tedious to him that dances attendance, it is eaſy to believe me when I ſhall ſay that it ſeem'd much longer to the Count then it in reality was. His Eminency who was ever in Love with the Princeſs, was glad of meeting with a Pretence of ſeeing her, and was that time come to tell her anew that her Husband ſhould return when ſhe pleaſed; but that ſhe muſt intimate to him that he muſt abſolutely divorce himſelf from the Count's Intereſts, who with juſt reaſon was become ſuſpected by the King, not only by the retreat he had choſen out of

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the Kingdom, but likewiſe by the Practices he kept on foot with the Enemies of the State. Madam *d' Elbœuf* could not endure he ſhould thus ſpeak ill of a Prince that had too much honour to be wanting to his Duty & without taking notice that ſhe was going to give him matter of making her reproaches. *Pardon me, my Lord,* ſaid ſhe to him, *if I interrupt you; I know the Count to be uncapable of what you ſay; And his greateſt Misfortune is the Averſion you bear him, nay and if you would but own the truth to me, you hate him becauſe he would not marry* Madam de Comballet. *But tell me, would you have done it, had you been in his Place? And all Prejudice aſide, is it a reaſon to perſcoute him? No, Madam, I ſhould not have done it,* the Cardinal made anſwer, *and I'le tell you why. He lov'd you at that time, and it was impoſſible for him to Love another. But now he Loves a Citizen's Wife of* Sedan, *and no longer*

Loves

Loves you; now that he abandons the most Lovely Princess in the World, for a Woman so much Inferiour to you in all kinds; I very much wonder you still take his Part.

The Cardinal held this Discourse upon a secret notice he had receiv'd, that the Count was gone from *Sedan* to visit the Person he mention'd. This was a Fair occasion for the taking him up, supposing from the moment he ceas'd being in Love with Madam *d' Elbœuf*, the Cardinal had been so far from thinking of securing him; that he bent his thoughts only upon carrying this news. But he could not have worse tim'd his Business, the Count's arrival justify'd his Innocence; and indeed Madam *d' Elbœuf* being fully persuaded of it, made him no answer, save that it was indifferent to her who the Count Lov'd; that he was very much mistaken if he fancy'd that she was in any wise concern'd

concern'd in it; that ſhe had told him the ſame thing ſeveral times, and that ſhe not only wondred at his having forgotten it, but likewiſe that he dar'd to expreſs ſuſpicions to her, which only belonged to a Perſon that had ſome Power over her. As ſhe ſaid all this to him without any concern, the Cardinal could not ſay all to her he would have done had he ſeen her in another temper; however having found the means of turning the Diſcourſe upon what reguarded himſelf he would needs diſcourſe her of his Paſſion; But his Reception was ſuch that he went away terribly vex'd.

The Count, who was ſtill in Ambuſcade in the ſame Place, having obſerv'd him as he took Coach, perceiv'd he was not ſatisfy'd; and as he partly gueſs'd at the ſubject of his Diſcontent, the jelouſy he had entertain'd upon ſo long a Viſit, vaniſh'd immediately:

immediately: But another disquiet succeeded to this; The Cardinals coming had interrupted the Converſation he had with the Dutcheſs, and he knew not how to renew it. At length as he wou'd as ſoon have choſe to dye as not to be truly inform'd how he ſtood in her heart, he reſolv'd upon going again into the houſe, thinking he might with ſafety do it, no body knowing that the Cardinal had bought all his Merchandize.

The Dutcheſs was no ſooner inform'd of his return, but that ſhe return'd into her Cloſet with him, where without his entreating her to tell him the Occaſion of the Cardinal's Viſit, ſhe gave him an Account of it word for word. He interrupted her when ſhe came to ſpeak of the Citizen's Wife of *Sedan*, and he own'd to her that he had ſeen one, that ſo he might eclipſe himſelf,

ſelf, as he had done, under Colour of ſome Intrigue with her. The Dutcheſs being not minded to ſhew the inclination ſhe had for him, ask'd him on what account he ſaid that, and that it had been good if he were to juſtify himſelf; but that for her part, ſhe did not enquire after what he did. Theſe words made him almoſt mad, and after having complain'd of the little acknowledgement, ſhe had for him, he ſet on foot again the Diſcourſe of the Picture, asking her if ſhe would have the Cruelty to keep it. He ſaid a thouſand ſoft things to her upon this occaſion, but which the Princeſs did not yield to, ſo that ſeeing he loſt his time, he would have taken leave of her. The Dutcheſs ſeeing him in Deſpair at her refuſal, was very much perplex'd how to reconcile her Virtue with her Love, and ſeeking a Medium to

all

all this, she bid him stay a moment longer, during which, making semblance of musing on something else, she took her Picture out of her Pocket, and fell a confronting it again with the others. The Count knew not what this meant, and said nothing more to her, either thro' Affliction at her Denyal, or for that he found himself oblig'd to quit her. But this Princess being willing he should go away with more hopes; *Prince*, said she to him, *I mean to make you a Present in lieu of that you ask of me, 'tis a Stone that is said to have a mighty virtue for the stopping of Blood. It must needs be precious to you who are so often engag'd in the midst of Battels, and who may hourly have occasion for it.* Upon these words she went into her Chamber, as it were to fetch it, and purposely leaving her Picture among the others, this was a secret him

to him, that there are certain things which the Ladies will not give; but which they'd be ſorry ſhould we not take.

The Count, who had continually his eyes upon this Picture, ſeiz'd on it at the ſame time, and putting it very preciouſly into his Pocket, he reſolv'd not to be ſo honeſt as to reſtore it. In the mean while the Dutcheſs return'd, holding in her hand the Stone ſhe had mention'd, and caſting her eyes, without making ſemblance of any thing, where ſhe had left the Picture, ſhe was overjoy'd to ſee that he had had the wit to improve the Occaſion. For in ſhort, ſhe had been afraid that the force of Love might make him do a thing which Novice-Lovers impute to a great reſpect, while their Miſtreſſes impute it to a great Blockiſhneſs. The Count after having ſeiz'd on what he deſir'd, moſt willingly receiv'd what ſhe

ſhe was content to give him, which otherwiſe he ſhould not have much valued, & being afraid farther Diſcourſe might open the way to ſome pique, he went away, after having aſſur'd her of a Love that was proof againſt abſence, nay and againſt her Cruelty. The Lady not daring to diſcover to him what paſs'd ſecretly in her heart, contented her ſelf with wiſhing him a good Journey, but when he was gone, ſhe found her ſelf over whelm'd with a profound ſadneſs. The Cardinal's Confident having obſerv'd it in dreſſing her, ſuſpected there was ſomething in the wind, and the Toy-Merchant's ſecond Viſit, with the private Converſation the Dutcheſs had had with him, making her Conjecture that he was peradventure ſome Meſſenger from the Count *de Soiſſons*, ſhe was no ſooner over the Service ſhe was oblig'd to pay at her Lady's Toilet,

Toilet, but that ſhe went to the Cardinal: She declar'd her ſuſpicions to him, and that Miniſter underſtanding how that pretended Merchant return'd again to ſee Madam *d'Elbœuf*, he ſent for the Count *de Fieſque*, and ask'd him if he would be faithfull to him in a Command he had to lay upon him. The Count after having made him anſwer that his Eminency wrong'd him in queſtioning it: *Goe then this very moment and take Poſt*, the Cardinal renew'd, *and endeavour to get before a Courrier the Count* de Soiſſons *has here. If he be departed when you take Horſe, overtake him before he reaches* Rheims; *if you go firſt ſtay there till he arrives; for in ſhort, he can take no other Road, but above all remember that your fortune is at ſtake in acquitting your ſelf well of what I require.*

The Count did not fail to aſſure him that he would do his

Beſt. Nevertheleſs he was at a very great loſs how to come off with Honour from this affair, which put him under a Neceſſity either of loſing that Miniſters favour, or that of the Count *de Soiſſons*, who was his friend. To reconcile ſo difficult a thing, he repair'd immediately to an Officer of his Acquaintance, and having open'd his heart to him, he begg'd of him to ſerve him in that Occaſion. The Officer told him he needed only to Command. Thus the Count having acquainted him with what was to be done, the Count took Poſt, and Enquired on the way if there was no Courrier before. He was anſwer'd in the Negative, which made him go more at his Eaſe, and he arriv'd at *Rheims* in the Dusk of the Evening, an hour after the Officer, whom he had caus'd to put on ſuch another ſuit of Cloaths as the Merchant

was deſcrib'd to him to wear, arriv'd, and was no ſooner alighted, but that he was ſeiz'd. He ask'd what they meant to do with him, and the Count having told him that he muſt return to *Paris*, he proteſted that he ſhould remain reſponſible for his Delay. But all he ſaid was meer Grimmace, the Count made no ſemblance of hearing him, and had him kept in ſight, under a ſafe Guard 'till the next Morning. Theſe Precautions made the Guards believe that he was a Pris'ner of Importance, and this was what the Count ſtudyed to inſinuate into them, that ſo, when they were arriv'd at *Paris*, they might give the Cardinal an account of his Zeal in Executing his Orders. In the mean while, inſtead of going to Reſt he went out of the Inn, and ſtaying upon the Avenues by which the Poſt was to paſs, he heard a Courier

coming, that had much outſtript his Poſtillon. He bid him ſtop when he came near him, and that he had ſomething of Conſequence to ſay to him. Now it was juſt the Count *de Soiſſons*, and fancying he knew the Count *de Fieſques* voice again, he made a halt, ſtanding however upon his guard. *De Fieſque* notwithſtanding it's being dark could perceive that he had Cloaths on of the colour expreſs'd to him, and not doubting but this was the Perſon he had order to ſeize: *Draw near*, he ſaid to him, *I have ſomething of Conſequence to ſay to you.* This repetition confirming the Count of it's being the Party he imagin'd: *Is it you Count* de Fieſque, he ſaid to him, *and by what Adventure do I find you here?* Theſe words let the Count *de Fieſque* know that it was not only the Courier he ſought, but alſo the Count *de Soiſſons*. Thus being no longer able to retain his joy?

Yes Sir, 'tis I, he said to him, *without flattering my self I may assure you that I have newly done you a Signal piece of service.* Upon these words they drew near each Other, and after a more particular Examination they Embrac'd with no less fondness, then if they had not seen one another in a thousand Years. Those Embraces being over, the Count *de Fiesque* accquainted him with the Order he had received from the Cardinal, and how he had put another man in his room, that so he might not lose his Credit with him. However that he must advise him not to change Horses at *Rheims*, that they might not mind his Passage, and that the Cardinal should not have matter to reproach him that he should have secur'd him as well as the Other.

The Count having found he had reason, took leave of him, after having express'd a mighty

ſence for the ſervice he had done him. *De Fieſque* return'd to the Inn, and the Count *de Soiſſons* ſtaid for the coming up of his Poſt-boy, whom he gave ſome mony that he might not be obſtinate for ſtaying in that Town. In the mean while *de Fieſque* having ſtaid the time, or much thereabouts that the Counts paſſing muſt take up, departed from *Rheims* with the Guard that conducted the Pris'ner, and being come to *Paris*, he put him into the *Baſtile* according to the order he had from the Cardinal. This Miniſter underſtanding the Succeſs of his journey, went immediately from his Pallace, to go himſelf and Examine the Priſoner; and as he did not doubt but that it was the Toy-Merchant, whom he had heard no talk of ſince, which however he muſt needs have done, had he been really a Merchant, ſince he was to receive of

of him the price of his Shop, he entred *Elbœuf* Hall, which was on his way. Madam *d'Elbœuf* who did not delight in his Viſits, was ſurpriz'd to ſee him, but ſhe was much more ſo, at his diſcourſe to her. *I own to you, Madam,* ſaid he to her, *as ſoon as he had taken a Seat, that you and your Toy Merchant have deceived me, I like a ſilly fool was Shamm'd upon, but this is my Comfort that my ſillineſs is of no long Continuance: But that diſguiſed Merchant ſhall rue the Cheat, and I am come on purpoſe to acquaint you, that I have Lodg'd him in the* Baſtile, *where I ſhall treat him as he deſerves.*

Madam *d'Elbœuf* chang'd Colour at this Compliment; Nevertheleſs making reflexion at the ſame time, that a Woman ought never to own a thing of that Nature: *Secure who you will,* ſhe made him anſwer, *what's that to me, and I would feign know, how*

for you would have me concern'd in't? How! Madam, Cry'd the Cardinal, *d'ye pretend to make me believe that you are not concern'd in a thing, when I see you are a Principal Party in the Plot? You don't think me so simple, sure, as to believe it, you may indeed, deceive a Husband, but not a Lover. I have allready told you the one has more piercing Eyes than the other, and since you will not sincerely own the Cheat, within a moment I shall tell it you from one end to the other.* In saying this out went he, and so to the *Bastile,* where he had the Prisoner brought before him. He being instructed in all he was to say, did not wait for the Cardinals speaking to him, and as soon as he saw him, he prevented him by Complaints, beseeching him to do him justice upon those that had taken him up. The Cardinal at first, imagin'd he made such a noise only to elude the

the accuſation he had reaſon to apprehend; Nevertheleſs he began to be diffident when he had view'd him, that poſſibly they had been miſtaken, principally when he had ask'd him who he was? what he did at *Paris*? and whither he was going, when that he had been caught running Poſt? This man anſwer'd him upon all, and the Cardinal remaining ſatisfy'd that this was none of the Perſon he ſought for, withdrew very much out of Countenance, nay and highly incens'd at the Count *de Fieſque*, whom he tax'd with not having done his duty. He ſent for him at the ſame time, and vented his anger upon him. *De Fieſque* endeavour'd to inſinuate to him, that he had done what he could, and excus'd himſelf upon the reſemblance of Cloaths that had deceiv'd him; but his Eminency not reliſhing his Excuſes, look'd ſowr, nay,

and would not ſee him for ſome time.

During theſe Tranſactions, the Dutcheſs was under mortal Apprehenſions occaſion'd by ſeveral Reaſons. The ſtrongeſt proceeded from her Preſumptions of the Counts being a Priſoner, and for that ſhe was afraid the Cardinal might underhand, publiſh how he had diſcover'd him. Wherefore ſhe durſt not ſtay at home, for fear ſome one ſhould come to tell her this ſad News: But in ſhort, the Count *de Fieſque* gueſſing at her anxiety, thought it would be much better to let her know that he was Privy to the Count *de Soiſſons* Loving her, than to leave her any longer in pain. For this purpoſe, he went in queſt of her every where, where he imagin'd he might find her; and having found her walking in the Evening in *Luxembourg* Garden; *Madam*, ſaid he

to

to her, *d'ye know that I am fall'n out with the Cardinal, and that a friend of yours is the Cauſe of it?* The Dutcheſs not knowing what he aim'd at, bluſht at this Diſcourſe, and *Mr. de Fieſque* ſeeing her Perplexity, was willing to ſpare her the pains of an anſwer. *He pretended*, added he, *to cauſe a man to be ſecur'd, whom he imagin'd came to ſee you from the Count* de Soiſſons, *and having cull'd me out for this feat, the Engagement I have with that Prince did not permit me to Obey him. I did indeed, encharge my ſelf with the Commiſſion; but with deſign to do the Count Service. I caus'd another man to act the part of him whom I was to ſecure; and after having ſecur'd him, which was no difficult matter, ſince he went to deliver himſelf up where I had bid him, I poſted my ſelf upon the High-way, to give the other notice that he ſhould out of hand make his Eſcape, and that he*

ſhould

ſhould tell the Count de Soiſſons *the Service I had done him. But I was much ſurpriz'd, when, inſtead of the Party I expected, I found it to be him himſelf, and as it has been buzz'd about that he was taken up, and that it is impoſſible but that it muſt render you uneaſy, I am very glad I can diſperſe your Diſquiets.*

The Dutcheſs not knowing whether ſhe might confide in him, gazing upon him before ſhe would utter her mind, to endeavour to diſcover whether he was ſincere or not, did at length Phancy ſhe perceiv'd ſomething that was for her turn. However meaning to ſhrift him further: *Are ye in good Earneſt*, ſaid ſhe to him, *and can ye be ſo Unmodiſh as to be ſincere*? The Count very ſeriouſly affirm'd the thing to her, and the Dutcheſs no longer queſtioning it, own'd to him how that the Count *de Soiſſons* came to ſee her, but made great

great aſſeverations of her not having any eſteem for him, *I do not require, de Fieſque* repartee'd, *to be your Confident in that matter; nor ſhall I ever require to be further your Confident than you of your own motion ſhall pleaſe to make me. I am nevertheleſs the Counts and your Servant, and this is what I am proud to aſſure you of.* But let him ſay what he would, the Dutcheſs would never own any thing to him; and he did not think it, ſeeming by further arguing as it were, to wreck her ſecret out of her.

In the mean while, the Cardinal, who had much ado to digeſt what had befall'n him, had ſtill new matter of diſquiet, by an Intimation given him by the Count *de St. Chaumont.* This Lord in his return from *Germany*, met the Count *de Soiſſons* in his return to *Sedan*, and having known him again, notwithſtanding that Diſguiſe, he ask'd him whence

whence that Change proceeded, and whether it lay in his way to do him Service. But as he was of the like Temper with all the Great Lords of the Kingdom, who with Emulation ſtrove to make their Court to the Cardinal, he was no ſooner at *Paris*, but that he inform'd him of his Rencounter. That Miniſter was much ſurpriz'd, when he perceiv'd by the Deſcription of the Perſon, that it was the Count himſelf he had ſeen at the Dutcheſſes. He was mortally angry at himſelf for not having known him, and recalling his features into his memory, he could only attribute his miſtake, to the little care he had taken to view him. In the mean while, tho' extreme was his vexation, he would not take any notice, even forbidding the Count to ſpeak to any Body of what he had told him. For he pretended to catch the Count in

the

the ſame Snare, wherefore that he might the ſooner lure him to undertake to ſee Madam *d'Elbœuf* he ſent a Privy-Seal to that Lady, for her to retire to *Villemareuil*, Any other would have taken ſuch an Order for a Diſgrace, and it's well known that moſt Ladies look upon the Neceſſity of withdrawing from Court, as the greateſt misfortune that can befall them; but ſhe having her reaſons to Love Solitarineſs, departed from *Paris* with the greateſt pleaſure imaginable.

This News was quickly carried to *Sedan*; but at the ſame time it arriv'd, *Mr. de Fieſque* gave notice to the Count *de Soiſſons* that this pretended Exile was only a Snare, cunningly laid to ſurprize him: that the ſafeſt for him was to ſtay where he was, and that in caſe he ſtood in need of a Confident he offer'd him his ſervice. The Count *de Soiſſons* would have

been

been glad, the Case had stood so with him, for it's a sign a man's in no ill terms with his Mistress. However as he was unable to bring matters to that pass, he thank'd him for his good will, and according to his advice he resolv'd to be upon his Guard. In the mean while he continued his Visits to his Mistress of *Sedan*, and that woman taking for marks of Love, what she ought at most to have only attributed to his Civility, she became so charm'd with that Prince, that her Passion shew'd it self in all her Actions. The Count observ'd it several times, and as it would ill become a Man to be cruel, he so caress'd her, as made that poor woman believe that she was really belov'd by him. Nay and there came something more of it than I have yet said; for she proved with Child, which however was not presently discover'd, for the

the Count being afraid of it's coming to the Dutcheſs's ears, recommended to her above all things carefully to conceal it.

While theſe things occurr'd at *Sedan*, the Dutcheſs having no news of the Count, was extremely amaz'd at it in her ſolitude. What ſhe had done did in her Opinion merit a greater remembrance; for in ſhort ſhe could not imagine, but that he had ſenſe enough as to think that ſhe had purpoſely forgot her Picture, that he might have the opportunity of taking it. Now her niceneſs upon the point could not reconcile it ſelf with the Tranquillity he was in after ſuch a favour, often ſaying in her ſelf that ſhe was much miſtaken if he was not unworthy of it. As theſe thoughts poſſeſt her mind, & which ſhe could not communicate to any body, ſhe ſought out the moſt ſolitary places, there to indulge her penſive humour. Moſt commonly

commonly was it in the Hazel Arbour, I have before mention'd, and being there, ſhe let her ſorrow ſo prevail upon her, that ſhe guſht out into abundance of tears. The Court was then return'd to *Monceaux*, the Cardinal having thought expedient to be near at hand to her abode, that he might the better ſurprize the Count *de Soiſſons* in caſe he came to ſee her. In the mean while, being glad alſo to ſee her himſelf, he pretended to go a hunting, and ſtraying on purpoſe from his People, he came to *Villemarenil* incognito, where he knew the Dutcheſs to be in the Arbour. He entreated her Confident, being the ſame who had told him where her Lady was, that ſhe would ſhew him the way to the Arbour, and ſeeing it at a diſtance, he bid the Confident go back, and he ſtole up to it as ſoftly as was poſſible.

Before

Before he entred the Arbour, he muſt needs peep thro' the leaves to ſee what the Dutcheſs was doing; but he ſaw her not there, and, indeed, ſhe was already gone out. He thought fitting to attend her coming there a moment, and that perhaps ſhe was not as yet come; Thus muzing he ſtay'd at leaſt a quarter of an hour, during which the Dutcheſs was walking in a ſhady Alley, a hundred Paces diſtant. Juſt in the time ſhe was there, it happened that the Count *de Soiſſons*, after having ſecretly left *Sedan*, was come into this Grove, where after having taken ſome turns, he directed his ſteps into this Alley. By chance the Dutcheſs had her back turn'd that way whence he came; Thus not having perceiv'd him, ſhe continued to go on, and being weary of walking in that Alley, ſhe went on towards the Arbour. The Count, who upon the

the firſt bluſh knew her, followed her thither ſtep by ſtep, nay and ſo cloſe, that it is a wonder that ſhe did not hear him walking after her. In the mean while, ſhe was ſtrangely ſtartled at finding the Cardinal there, and inſtantly going out again, her ſurprize was ſtill much greater, when ſhe ſaw the Count *de Soiſſons* before her. As for his part, he was not ſo much at firſt, and was juſt opening his mouth to tell her that he had not been able to continue abſent any longer, when the Cardinal's preſence, who ruſht out to run after the Dutcheſs, lockt up his tongue as to all matters of that nature. Now the Cardinal was no leſs amaz'd than they, and the firſt thought that came into his mind was, that the Count and the Dutcheſs having made an Aſſignation, he followed her into the Arbour, when his preſence had interrupted their Deſigns. As for the

the Count he on his part imagin'd that the Dutcheſs knew of the Cardinal's coming, and that repairing to him, ſhe would by no means ſtay in the Arbour, for fear of being found out there by ſome or other. Thus you ſee two men jelous to the utmoſt extremity, and as they both hated one another, hard words preſently paſs'd between them.

Madam *d'Elbœuf* above all things dreading the being made a ſubject of the publique talk, begg'd of 'em to curb their Tempers for her ſake, and as ſhe did not manifeſt more diſtinction for the one than for the other: this ſo piqu'd the Count *de Soiſſons*, that he forbore ſaying any thing diſobliging to the Cardinal, and made his Reſentment fall upon her. *You have reaſon, Madam,* he ſaid to her, *to be ſollicitous for a Man with whom I find you at an Aſſignation. Not that you fear the prejudice*

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the first blush knew her, followed her thither step by step, nay and so close, that it is a wonder that she did not hear him walking after her. In the mean while, she was strangely startled at finding the Cardinal there, and instantly going out again, her surprize was still much greater, when she saw the Count *de Soissons* before her. As for his part, he was not so much at first, and was just opening his mouth to tell her that he had not been able to continue absent any longer, when the Cardinal's presence, who rusht out to run after the Dutchess, lockt up his tongue as to all matters of that nature. Now the Cardinal was no less amaz'd than they, and the first thought that came into his mind was, that the Count and the Dutchess having made an Assignation, he followed her into the Arbour, when his presence had interrupted their Designs. As for the

the Count he on his part imagin'd that the Dutcheſs knew of the Cardinal's coming, and that repairing to him, ſhe would by no means ſtay in the Arbour, for fear of being found out there by ſome or other. Thus you ſee two men jelous to the utmoſt extremity, and as they both hated one another, hard words preſently paſs'd between them.

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prejudice this may do you, for if it were so, your Conduct would be different, but you apprehend that being a Priest and a Cardinal as he is, his Reputation must be ruin'd in the World, if what is here transacted came to be divulg'd?

These Reproaches went deep into the Dutchess's heart, and were the more sensibly afflicting, for that it was then no season for her to make a due Justification. Thus having only giv'n a General answer, the Count did so imprint it in his head, that what he had newly said was true, that after having added some other reproaches to those, he went away with a most desperate sorrow. Then was the Dutchess at a terrible loss, her heart would by no means have had him gone away with such thoughts, but on the other side, it was contrary to all Decency to retain him in the presence of a Man whom it became her to distrust

ſtruſt more than any Perſon living, and this Conſideration being the ſtrongeſt, ſhe let him go without ſaying a word to him. If the Cardinal had not had a thouſand things in his head, ſeeing this he would have triumph'd tho' he had not any ſhare in the Sacrifice, but beſides his believing that he had not any more reaſon than the Count to be ſatisfy'd, fear began to ſeize him: It came into his Head that the Count would lye in wait to Aſſaſſinate him, and this apprehenſion kept him with the Dutcheſs, tho' he deſign'd at firſt to have gone away preſently, with intent to have had him taken into Cuſtody. By this means the Count found no obſtacle in his return to *Sedan*, where he was no ſooner arriv'd, but that all People were ſurpriz'd at the Melancholly he labour'd under. As they preſum'd he then came from his *Sedan* Miſtreſſes Country-

Country-houſe; thoſe who had a Right to ſpeak to him familiarly, askt him whether ſhe was Cruel to him; but how could they imagine that, ſince according as ſhe grew big, it was impoſſible for her, notwithſtanding all the Care ſhe took, ſo to conceal it, as to hinder it from being the publick diſcourſe. And indeed it was not only at *Sedan* where ſhe began to paſs for the Counts Miſtreſs, but alſo throughout the whole Kingdom, where the report of her Condition was quickly ſpread abroad.

The Dutcheſs would not believe it at firſt, imagining it to be a Calumny invented by the Cardinal; beſides the journeys he had undertaken to *Paris* and *Villemareuil* with ſo much danger for him, was a ſtrong Proof, that ſhe it was he lov'd. But at the long run, after having a thouſand times taken his part in her heart,

ſhe

ſhe was forc'd to acquieſce upon a Letter ſhe receiv'd from her Husband, by which he let her know the Truth. Her ſpight made her Phancy at firſt, that far from being concern'd at this news it ought to be gratefull to her, ſince it helpt from her mind to baniſh a thouſand thoughts that were contrary to her repoſe, nay and to her Honour. But ſhe did not long perſiſt in theſe ſentiments, and that Princes infidelity affected her to ſuch a Degree, that after having revolv'd a thouſand things in her head, ſhe dwelt upon revenge, which flatter'd her more then all the reſt. Now imagining that the moſt juſt of all the meaſures ſhe could uſe, was to take her Husband off from his Intereſts, ſhe went to the Cardinal, to whom ſhe offer'd to do what he before had propos'd, the Cardinal ſurpriz'd at ſo unexpected a Complyance, endea-

vour'd to dive into the reaſon, & with his Wit was not long without diſcovering it. Seeing that nothing but ſpight caus'd her to make this ſtep, he would not all at once grant her ſome advantages ſhe demanded of him in favour of her Husbands return, and only endeavour'd to put this matter into negotiation, ſo to create a jealouſy in the Count, to whom he expected ſome friend or other would not fail to ſignify theſe frequent Interviews. And indeed, the Count *de Fiaſque*, ſeeing ſo many goings and comings of Madam *d'Elbœuf*, accordingly writ him word of it.

The Count was eaſily perſuaded of the Truth of what he writ to him, after what he himſelf had ſeen, and this news ſtill augmenting his Melancholly, he became ſo chang'd that his friends could hardly know him. The only ſolace he found was the writing a

Letter

Letter of Complaint to the Dutchess, who on her part having reason to be Jelous made him so bitter an answer, that far from minding to excuse her self as to the Love he attributed to her for the Cardinal, she left him to believe all he pleas'd. In the mean while the Count *de Fiesque* was not the only Person that took notice of the frequent visits the Dutchess made the Cardinal; One of her Husbands friends was for his sake in like manner allarum'd at it, and tho' we ought never to give such intimations, he nevertheless advertis'd the Duke of it, whom he proffer'd to steal away his Wife, and bring her to him. The Duke who was cur'd of his Jelousy, found it revive upon this notice, he took that friend at his word, and as the thing could not be done without a great deal of noise, he Imparted the Design to the Count *de*

Soiſſons. This was an accumulation of Grief for that Prince to whom ſuch a ſecret was a freſh proof of his unhappyneſs; nevertheleſs as the Duke who was bitterly incens'd againſt his Wife, had manifeſted at the ſame time ſome ill deſign upon her, as ſoon as ever he got her into his hands, a remaining ſpark of Affection made him believe, that he ſhould highly oblige that Lady if he gave her notice of it.

Madam *d' Elbœuf*, having had no deſire ſave for the rendring him alone jelous, was very much ſurpriz'd when ſhe came to know that her deſign had operated as well upon her Husband as upon him, and as ſhe knew the Duke to be of a Turbulent Spirit, and capable of puſhing things to the utmoſt Extremity in his firſt fury, ſhe thought Convenient to avoid his firſt Motions. For this purpoſe ſhe ſtir'd not abroad otherwiſe

therwise than well attended, which the Dukes friend being mightily amaz'd at, he signify'd to him, that their design was discovered and that it was impossible to accomplish what he had promis'd him. The Duke knew not whom to tax with this; Nevertheless seeing he could not be reveng'd on his Wife, he resolv'd to be so on the Cardinal, and knowing that without the Count *de Soissons* he could do nothing of himself, he did in such manner animate him against his Eminency, that they agreed together to take up Arms to drive him from Court. *Mr. de Bouillon*, who was his Eminency's declar'd enemy, promis'd not only to joyn with them, but likewise to cause several Potentates to declare in their behalf. The War being thus ready to break out, the Cardinal who could make use of the Royal Authority to reduce it

did not much trouble his head about their Projects, and being more ſollicitous to know how he ſtood in the Dutcheſs's Opinion, than for any thing elſe, he went to ſee her on the pretence of concluding her Husbands Affair; but going about to ſpeak to her of Love, he was ſo ill us'd by her, that he went away very much out of Countenance. He imagin'd, notwithſtanding all that had happen'd, that the Count *de Soiſſons* was ſtill in as good terms with her, as he had ever been, and that he was the Cauſe of his being ſo ill us'd. This Opinion, together with the Deſigns which that Prince was upon the point of proclaiming, did ſo exaſperate him, that he reſolv'd to have him rid out of the world, let it coſt what it would. For this purpoſe he not only ſent a conſiderable Army around *Sedan*, but alſo contriv'd to engage

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an Aſſaſſinate. Money, the uſual ſource of the greateſt Crimes, not failing him for the bringing about his Deſign, he found one of that Prince's Guard, who promis'd to do ſo horrible and ſo abominable an Act.

In the mean while the Kings Army advancing under the Conduct of the Mareſchal *de Chatillon*, and the Count *de Soiſſons* not being willing it ſhould be ſaid of him, that he had not dar'd to ſtirr out of the Walls of *Sedan*, went out to meet him with ſome Troups that he had rais'd at his own Coſt. The two Armies met two Leagues thence, and engaging in a Battel, the Count *de Soiſſons* being animated with Love, fought with ſo much Courage, that he put the Royal Army to the Rout. But when that this Prince imagin'd that nothing could any longer

hinder

hinder him from giving the Law to his Enemy; the wretched Guard, watching an occasion to do his feat, follow'd him to the corner of a Wood, where seeing him all alone! *Return, Sir, return,* said he to him, *the Enemies stand firm still at a Musket's Shot hence.* The Count knew the Guards voice, whom he had allways seen by him during the Battel, and thinking that he spoke in good earnest, he turn'd his head about, and lift up the Viser of his Helmet, to view where the Enemies were. But this Traytor fir'd his Pistol at him, and having hit him where the Count had expos'd by lifting up his Viser, he render'd himself worthy of the Reward that had been promis'd him, by the greatest and most enormous of all Crimes.

This News being brought to the

the Dutcheſs, it ſo over-whelm'd her with grief, that ſhe plainly perceiv'd that the Jelouſy that had ſpirited her againſt him, had not extinguiſh'd her Love. Nevertheleſs having many meaſures to keep in the World ſhe was forc'd to conſtrain her ſelf. As to the Cardinal, ſhe could never win ſo far upon her ſelf, as to give him a good look; and tho' he ſtudied to diſguiſe that Death, which he endeavour'd to have it believ'd that it happen'd after quite another manner, ſhe ever look'd upon him as the Author of that Homicide. In fine, tho' ſome time after her Husband made his Peace at Court, his Preſence could not afford her any joy. Where ever ſhe went, ſhe ſtill bore in her heart ſo ſenſible a ſorrow for the Death of that Prince, that after having languiſh'd ſome years,

years, she dy'd, to the great grief of her Husband, who all his Life long was Ignorant that it was the Count who had poſſeſs'd her real Affections.

The End.